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THE CHRIST OF TO-DAY

BY

GEORGE A. GORDON

MINISTER OF THE OLD SOUTH CHURCH, BOSTON

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge
1896

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FOURTH EDITION

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TO THE STUDENTS IN OUR THEOLOGICAL SEMINARIES,

TO THOSE ENTERING THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY,

AND TO THE NEW GENERATION OF CHRISTIAN LAYMEN,

WHOSE UNSPEAKABLE PRIVILEGE IT WILL BE

TO RECOVER BOTH FOR THE REASON AND THE HEART

THE OLD AND ALMIGHTY FAITH IN THE INFINITE CHRIST,

I Inscribe this Book,

IN PROFOUND SYMPATHY WITH THEIR HIGH CALLING,

IN DEVOUT GRATITUDE TO GOD FOR THEIR CONSECRATION,

IN AFFECTIONATE RESPECT,

AND IN GREAT AND CONFIDENT

EXPECTATION.

PREFACE.

THIS book had its origin in two lectures delivered before the Divinity School in Yale University in January, 1895; and in an essay prepared for the Unitarian Association of Boston, and given before several other clerical bodies in the same city. These three essays, however, constitute less than a third of the present discussion, and even that third has been entirely transformed through revision and extension of plan. The substance of the second chapter was read, in July last, before the Summer School of Theology at Western Reserve University.

The work has grown out of the reflection of the author upon the theological phenomena of the time, more accessible to the student in current thought than in books. The author is glad to acknowledge the great impulse in the direction of his studies derived from Principal Fairbairn's treatise, "The Place of Christ in Modern

Theology." That mine of learning, masterly historical generalization, and rich suggestion has given new strength to the Christian consciousness throughout the English-speaking world; and the longer it is read the more generative of ideas it will be found to be.

Nevertheless, there are questions perplexing the faith of our churches that Dr. Fairbairn's great work does not meet, — questions of which only one living in open communion in the heart of our American Christianity can fully know. Every nation must work out its own theology. Great Britain and Germany, Reformation and Patristic times, can but supply impulse and guidance. Importations without naturalization are alike fatal in thought as in life, and naturalization, to be thorough, must equal re-creation. A borrowed theology must signify that, in the highest sphere of human thought, the national mind is either incapable or indifferent; and neither of these terms describes the condition of the American mind to-day. The advice of Maurice at this point is full of meaning: "New-Englanders who try to substitute Berkeley or Butler, . . . or Kant or Hegel, for Edwards, and to form their minds upon any of them, must be forcing

themselves into an unnatural position, and must suffer from the effort. On the contrary, if they accept the starting-point of their native teacher, and seriously consider what is necessary to make that teacher consistent with himself, — what is necessary that the divine foundation upon which he wished to build may not be too weak and narrow for any human or social life to rest upon it, — we should expect great and fruitful results from their inquiries to the land which they must care for most, and therefore to mankind." The one foundation upon which Edwards wished to build was the absoluteness of God; and he has left for his followers the principle which, if resolutely employed, will insure both continuity and progress in the thought and life of American Christianity. The second chapter of the discussion contained in this volume is a fresh attempt to reach the absoluteness of God through the finality for mankind of the mind of Christ; the third chapter employs the mind of Christ as the creative and conservative principle in theology, and in other intellectual movements of the time; the fourth chapter sees in Christ the supreme instrument of the Spirit in the moral education of the race. A Christological interpre-

tation becomes a theological principle, and these issue in the great method of the preacher. However insignificant, the present discussion is a true continuation of the theological tradition which dates from our greatest theologian, Jonathan Edwards. His errors, his weaknesses, his great inconsistencies, and what Prof. A. V. G. Allen calls "his Inferno," have had altogether too long a history in New England thought. It is time that his original principle — the absoluteness of God — were allowed logical and unreserved expression in the faith of our churches. For further explanation of the occasion and motive of this book the author must refer the reader to the introductory chapter.

GEORGE A. GORDON.

OLD SOUTH PARSONAGE, BOSTON.

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

"And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready at the quarry: and there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building." — 1 KINGS vi. 7.

"About every great Christian truth there is a debatable ground. A definition is to be given; the bond of connection between the truth supposed and other related Christian truths is to be sought; a place is to be found for it in the general sum of our knowledge. All this work of accurate conception and explanation constitutes an open field for differences to arise among those who concur in the main thing. Two maps of the same country will seldom, if ever, exactly agree." — DR. GEORGE P. FISHER, *Faith and Rationalism*, p. 42.

"If we looked on the conceptions formed by us of God as fully coincident with reality, if we imputed to Him the infirmities inseparable from a finite mind, and regarded our operations of thought as an exact representation of his, we might be charged with an offensive anthropomorphism. But this charge does not hold against the assumption that He is a Spirit." — DR. GEORGE P. FISHER, *Faith and Rationalism*, p. 103.

"Pity is love and something more: love at its utmost." — T. T. MUNGER, *The Freedom of Faith*, p. 182.

THE CHRIST OF TO-DAY.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

I.

Revolutions in human affairs are of two kinds, the gradual and unconscious, and the sudden and violent. In our own history we have had two examples of the latter, the Civil War and that which resulted in the independence of the United States. French history furnishes many examples of this type of revolution; the Protestant Reformation in Germany, Switzerland, and the Netherlands, and the ultimate disaster to the Roman Empire must be put in the same class. So, too, must one think of the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, and of many of the great crises through which Israel passed, back to the Exodus. On the other hand, instances of gradual and peaceful changes of a fundamental nature are likewise numerous. The Reformation in England, the revolution that followed the revival of learning in mediæval Europe, the transforma-

tions wrought by the invention of printing, the discoveries of navigators, and the steady progress of science have been largely of this character. And in the history of Israel, so full of violent changes, there are not wanting illustrations of movements of a contrasted order. Before the temple of Solomon was built, a new and mighty turn had come in the fortunes of the people over whom he reigned. The wilderness wanderings were far behind. The nomadic days of the early settlement of the new country were long ago outgrown. The time of the city had arrived, with its notes of fellowship, order, and stability; with its concentration of population, interests, influence, and power. The outward sign of this national change was the building of the temple. It was a large undertaking, it marked a revolution in the life of the people, it was costly in the extreme; and yet so ripe were the times for the magnificent enterprise, that it went forward to its completion as if by magic. The sacrifice, the labor, the skill, the new ideas and adjustments necessary for it, all came with the ease of perfect spontaneity. Out of the consciousness of the splendid king at his best, representing as he did the consciousness of the people, came the great building for God, which marked an epoch in Israel's history, and recorded a silent but mighty revolution in the thought and feeling of the nation. This is the profounder meaning of the

beautiful description: "And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready at the quarry: and there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building." The times were ripe, and the nation moved out of the old narrow, outgrown world, and into the new world of breadth and hope, with the magnificent unconsciousness of healthy expanding life.

Through this ancient parallel one may see what has already taken place in the Christian church. A revolution has already been accomplished — for the most part peacefully, beautifully — in the fundamental thoughts of intelligent believers; the church has already moved, almost unconsciously, but still truly, out of the old narrow world into the new and vast world of our modern intelligence. All reflective disciples of Christ have been moving into a new realm of thought and feeling, and, like men on an ocean voyage, they hardly know how far they have come. The same sun and moon and stars and sea seem to make the fact of progress insignificant; but the day arrives when a new territory is sighted, and the reality of advance can no longer be doubted. The abiding facts in Christian faith, the permanent forces in Christian experience, the everlasting lights in the firmament of Christian truth, and the changeless element of feeling in which all genuine disciples of the Master live and move,

tend not infrequently to obscure the reality of movement from less to more. But there come hours of inevitable comparison, when the work of time for the Christian consciousness stands out in unmistakable greatness, when new thoughts, wider purposes, vaster enterprises, make the fact of emergence into a new world no longer deniable. And it needs repeated emphasis that the movement in our time out into the larger thought has taken place in an astonishingly spontaneous way. Little violence has been experienced anywhere. The first temple went up without the sound of hammers, and the new and magnificent edifice of Christian faith is rising as by a self-creative process.

II.

The first great expansion of the human mind in modern times began with the Copernican astronomy. The universe of the ancient thinker was insignificant, almost petty, compared with that of the intelligent man of to-day. The first impression that one gets upon entering that superseded universe is its narrowness, its want of range and room. One is surprised at its meagreness, as one might fancy a millionaire from Fifth Avenue, New York, to be over the insignificant, dingy quarters of certain mediæval kings. Our planet was the centre in the old astronomy, the biggest of all the heavenly bodies, the most im-

portant from all points of view, and the whole stellar world had its final cause of being in ministering to the welfare of the earth. The unparalleled creation hymn with which the Book of Genesis opens is based upon that old astronomy. It could have been based upon no other, for there was then no other. And the fact that it rests upon superseded science no more discredits its imperishable moral and spiritual worth than the immense mass of outgrown opinion in Dante's great poem discredits the enduring splendor of that production, and its permanent value for mankind. Still, the fact is obvious that the material universe of the sublime singer in Genesis was exceedingly limited: "And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made the two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made also the stars. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness."[1] Here the conception is that the whole stellar world has its existence simply as an attendant upon this globe. Under

[1] Gen. i. 14–18.

similar conceptions the race lived until far down into modern times. The sense of vastness was largely absent from their universe as extended in space; it was small, and necessarily so. It is matter of common history that the shock experienced by faith, upon the publication of the Copernican astronomy, was very great. A wise Catholic scholar tried to allay the anxiety concerning the inspiration of the Bible, as it stood in contradiction to the new science, with the remark that the Bible was given, not to teach how the heavens go, but how to go to heaven. It has been of the utmost comfort to Christian thinkers to remember how swiftly, and on the whole how quietly, the faith of the church adjusted itself to the stupendous revolution in man's thought of the material universe inaugurated by the Copernican astronomy. The new astronomy has given grandeur to the idea of creation, — has indirectly attested the dignity of man, as being the creation that he has discovered, the orders and worlds that he has explored. And even when man comes to the limit of thought, having swept within the field of vision empire upon empire, system upon system, and universe upon universe, and stands upon the widest circumference of science and looks beyond into the infinite, the infinite is still his conception, the boundless spaces are yet in a way subject to him. The modern astronomy, in giving such immeasurable

expansion to the outward world, has resulted indirectly in a new consciousness of the dignity of man. For the greater the universe becomes, the more illustriously does it display the marvelousness of the human intellect. The universe is man's universe; and the bigger it is, the more honor does it reflect upon him. Infinitely more faith than unbelief has come from the Copernican conception. In discovering how petty this earth is in the total limitless reach of the stellar universe, man has rediscovered himself as superior to all environments, as of more worth than the birds of heaven and the heavens themselves. The indirect result of the new astronomy in building the consciousness of man into the sense of dignity needs to have fresh emphasis laid upon it to-day.

But the deepest reason for this reference to the greater world in space in which men are now living is that the sense of vastness in their surroundings has elicited a corresponding mental trait. For the intelligent modern man, living in the sense of a measureless universe, triviality of conception has wellnigh become an impossibility. Among the greatest educators of our time, a foremost place must be given to the consciousness of living under an infinite outward order. It has put the imagination under a fresh and diviner spell. It has given new volume and form to the feeling of awe in the presence of the sublime. It has translated the sweet illusion of vision into a

boundless universe of amazing orders and splendors, and made men aware that the symbolism of sight, with reference to the contents of space, is but the merest hint of the infinite and overwhelming reality. It has taxed the mind with a new object, and imparted to it an amplitude that has told for much. This large-mindedness has affected the interpretation of man's relations to God, and the significance of the career of Christ. It has not driven thinkers back to the daring conception of Origen, of an infinite stairway of worlds up which the hosts of mankind are made to march, as the sublime discipline through which sin is to be overcome and annihilated, and the final consummation of which is that God may be all in all. There has been no such venturesomeness as the result of the sense of the exceeding greatness of the universe in which we live. But there is evident, I think, as the direct outcome of life under the shadow of an immeasurable material order, a new and large way of treating our whole human problem, and the parallel mission of Christ. An immense library of theological literature has thus been quietly outgrown. Its logic has not been considered and refuted; its narrow premises have been entirely transcended. Veneration for human aspiration and heroism, and for the essential that always appears in all genuine forms of faith, however crude these forms may be, still makes it pleasant and even profitable to

explore the worlds of the schoolmen, the reformers, and the puritans; but the most sympathetic student must feel that these former things have passed away. Without the denial of any one of their greater beliefs, this feeling is fixed. The thing that makes them obsolete is the pettiness of their world, the narrowness of their outlook, the want of breadth and range of mind. Through the discipline of the world in which we live, immeasurably extended in space as it is, we have quietly transcended the habits of thought of a former age. It was no disrespect for the past, or want of veneration for the intellectual power of his predecessors, least of all any deficiency of appreciation of the nobleness of philosophy and theology as callings, that led Hegel to say, in answer to an invitation to give instruction in logic and traditional theological opinion, that that would be to become "whitewasher and chimney-sweep" at the same time. His conception of the human mind, and of God in history, utterly transcended, and rendered obsolete for him, the traditional German thought in which he was bred. Our universe is a vast, an infinite universe, and our conceptions in the realm of Christian faith must have this vast and infinite character.

III.

But far more important than the indefinite enlargement in space is the enormous extension

in time that our human world has undergone. A new idea of history, almost bewildering in its greatness, has taken possession of the mind of this century. Instead of a race with a career running only for six thousand years, we have a humanity with a probable history of a hundred thousand years. The birth and growth of the very idea of humanity, and the expanse of time over which it must be carried and made good, is perplexing in the extreme. The burden of the world was heavy upon the prophetic heart in the ancient age, but it is incalculably heavier to-day. It is a picture of great scope and impressiveness that Carlyle paints in his French Revolution, his Frederick the Great, and his Oliver Cromwell, but the picture gives only a hint of the life of three modern nations in the two centuries preceding our own, — the French nation and the Prussian in the eighteenth century, and the English in the seventeenth; the historic vista extends no farther. It is a wonderful pageant that Gibbon causes to pass before the eye of the student in his Decline and Fall of Rome, but the more than a thousand years through which he carries his work, measured against historic time, are but as yesterday when it is past, or as a watch in the night. It is a marvelous drama that Grote develops in his great History of Greece, and the action and the characters and the tragic issues have an abiding and wonderful

meaning; still the twelve volumes deal with a very small part of the race, and a very brief period of time. Rawlinson puts before us a vast and dim world in his Five Ancient Monarchies; and we feel the spell of great antiquity as we read his pages, and are touched with the sense of the dark and stormy morning of our humanity. But when we have passed from Carlyle to Gibbon, from Gibbon to Grote, from Grote to Rawlinson, we have come only to the beginning of the new conception of history. The countless silent centuries that lie behind recorded history are to-day one of the most touching, fascinating, and bewildering objects of thought. They have at last risen from their long sleep; they have finally found recognition; their labor and sorrow in preparing the way for historic man is no longer ignored; the tears and the blood by which they wrought out the physical forms from which our better life has come, and the beginnings of civilization that they were able to hand on to their more fortunate successors, are becoming part of the sympathetic and grateful recollection of mankind. It is indeed strange, this resurrection of a dead world, this emancipation from oblivion of a forgotten humanity, this return to recognition and brotherhood with the later generations of the millions that lived in the dust behind the records of history, and looked "with dumb eyes to the silence of the skies." It is a speaking symbol

of the possible reach of human imagination and sympathy, of the essential unity of the race, of the general sublime memorial of all the serving and aspiring ages that shall at last be erected in the grateful and venerative memory of mankind.

Here, then, is the second call for the new habit of thought. Here is the second cause of the revolution that has already taken place in the nobler mind of the church. The problem is our problem, and the old mental mood is totally inadequate to cope with it. The Hebrew form of the problem, the apostolic form of the problem, the mediæval and puritan forms of it, are not large enough for that which confronts the believer to-day. The Hebrew prophet was for the most part satisfied with the salvation of the remnant of Israel, while the hostile contemporaneous Gentile world was under doom. The universalism of the Old Testament seer concerns the golden ages of the future, and has nothing to do with the multitudinous populations of the past. The apostle Paul has indeed a magnificent sense of history, and a profound philosophy of it, as is abundantly attested by his speech to the Athenians, and by passages of the greatest moment in the letters to the Galatians and Romans. But the ideal of a Christ for humanity, ultimate as a form of thought although it is, and capable of infinite expansion in answer to the developments of time and the facts of the case, could not have

meant for him what it must mean for the believer to-day. The restricted conception of salvation inaugurated under the apparent appalling compulsion of facts by Augustine, cherished through the Middle Ages, revitalized by the reformers, and descending with the puritan inheritance to the present generation, is possible to those only who shut their eyes to the vastness of human history. The consciousness of history as of unmeasured extent, and as embracing countless multitudes of the human race, inferior doubtless in every way to the men of to-day, but upon whose sacrifices and rude civilizations, representing worlds of struggle and suffering, the modern age has built, and without which even genius itself would be comparatively helpless, is one of the great forces that are calling for a new conception of salvation. It is impossible to believe that the unmeasured worlds of prehistoric man that at the present time are rolling into the vision of the nobler spirits, and whose wonderful contributions in the way of brain and muscle and rude inventions, of the indispensable preliminaries of civilization, are receiving wider and more reverent recognition, do not stand in the eternal loving thought of God in Christ. The idea that confines salvation to the remnant, whether that be the remnant of the Hebrew prophet, or that of the mediæval saint, or of the puritan, is to-day incredible. If cherished, it can have but one issue, — atheism.

The church is on trial. The humanity that she must include in her faith and prayer and sympathy has multiplied itself like the sand of the sea, and crowds the expanded spaces of time with hosts that no man can number. The thinking world of to-day will insist upon an answer to the question whether the Christ of the modern preacher has any relation to this recovered and piteously needy humanity. A great many, who are afraid of breadth, are looking favorably upon the scientific solution, the survival of the fittest. Among the lower animals, from countless multitudes that cannot succeed, and that are born to fail, a few strong specimens are found that prevail over the hard conditions and live on. From these come swarms of offspring, the overwhelming majority of which are under certain doom, and from whose doomed multitudes a second selection of the strong is made, to carry onward the torch of life. Nature, according to this conception, produces more than she wants, more than can by any possibility live, in order that from this excess of numbers she may have a better pick. Her procedure is perfectly frank and undisguised. She wants a few fine specimens, with which to carry the race higher, and she thinks that she will succeed better if she shall have a larger number from which to choose. Care for the unfit she has none, regard for the perishing is utterly foreign to her heart. She

multiplies to inconceivable excess the forms of life, in order that the chances for selection of the fit may be indefinitely improved. The unfit are her blunder, the piteous witnesses of her incapacity and heartlessness. This is the way in which science disposes of the abortive life in the lower animal kingdoms. The question is, whether it is safe for the church to look with favor upon this scientific method. It may be well enough in the non-moral sphere, but what shall be said of it when it stands as the self-disclosure of the moral head of the universe, and the law according to which he deals with mankind? If only the morally fit survive, — if the creation of mankind is purposely excessive in order that from the wider reprobation a larger election may be made, — the old theology is indeed safe, but the religion of Christ is gone. If the method of God with humanity is but another aspect of the scientific doctrine of the salvation of the strong, if his government is grounded upon a necessary reprobation and election, then He who came to seek and to save the lost is not his Son. For the method of Jesus is in absolute contradiction to that procedure, and his Spirit is the eternal arraignment and condemnation of irresponsible Almightiness. Fools should never handle dangerous tools, and those who, in the name of conservatism, are courting the scientific doctrine of the survival of the fittest, are sadly in need of this

admonition. The voices which seem so sweet to the theologian who is afraid of the breadth of the modern time, and who is anxious to conserve venerable theological traditions, are the songs of sirens, and "near by is a great heap of rotting human bones; fragments of skin are shriveled on them. Therefore sail on."[1] On this basis the old theology is safe, but the Christian religion and the mighty conception of a divine humanity are doomed. The new consciousness of history, the expansion of our human world in time, is the opportunity of the Christian religion, its fresh and ampler vindication, and it is the hour of trial for the church of to-day. If the present reach of the nobler imagination, the rich increase of historic sense and sympathy, and the consciousness of a human communion that is indefinably and mysteriously great, does not result in conceptions worthier Christ, more in accord with that which in the soul is likest God, the Christian thinkers, and all those who are responsible for the forms of faith for this generation, will miss an amazing chance to serve the kingdom of God. One feels that, if out of the profounder and better life of the time religious conceptions should arise, they would be so close an approximation to the mind of Christ as to possess a power almost elemental. The truth in its true form is the mightiest thing on earth: it does not need eloquence or skill or

[1] Odyssey, book xii., Professor Palmer's translation.

passion to plead its claims; it makes way for itself; rises upon mankind as the unclouded sun does upon the earth, and puts the world under the sense of its glory and beneficent power.

IV.

Another modifying force of the time is the sense of a contemporaneous humanity. The world has grown much smaller in the last half century: the time consumed in a journey to Washington, a hundred years ago, would to-day take one almost round the globe. The various populations of the planet have met and looked one another in the face. The different forms of contemporaneous civilization are under study and inter-comparison, and the prevailing mood among believing scholars is that the Christian creed must include the race as the subject of the Divine education. To-day there is a whole world to be saved, and one's plan of salvation must be adequate to the practical opportunity. The absoluteness of Christianity is one of the great words of this generation. The serious consideration of that word and its complete vindication would work a revolution in traditional theological opinion. The absoluteness of Christianity does not merely mean that it is to supersede all other religions. I believe it does mean that. But it must also mean the disclosure of the relation of the extra-Christian world to Christ in the divine plan of its existence. To

proclaim Christianity as the absolute religion, to regard it as superseding and doing away with all other forms of faith, and to fail to vindicate its everlasting relation to all men because they are men, is a one-sided and poor procedure. If Christianity is absolute, that absoluteness must be shown, in part at least, by the final divine interpretation which it puts upon the previous imperfect disciplines of the various nations to whom it is sent. The scholarship of the Christian world, the large and sympathetic study of the religions of mankind, the feelings bred by the honorable international trade of the earth, the steady emergence of a cosmopolitan habit of mind, and the wonderful growth of the idea of humanity, make it impossible longer to live in the traditional theology. It is not big enough, nor is it good enough as theoretic support and inspiration for the best interests and activities of the world to-day. The vast missionary enterprise of the church must ever demand a larger consecration of wealth, a nobler sacrifice, a wider devotion; but the causal fountain of all this is the character of faith. There is at present no adequate theoretic support and incentive for this magnificent enterprise of the church of our time. The moment that the traditional theology is utilized in developing enthusiasm for foreign missions, that moment the conscience of the best men turns away from the dismal business; and

only as the traditionalist abandons theology and betakes himself to Christianity in its New Testament form, and stakes everything upon the prevailing passion of human love as it is born and fired out of the heart of Christ and out of the Fatherhood of God, does he make his appeal effective and overwhelming. The fact that the missionary work of the churches was founded upon the old theology is no reason why it should be continued upon that basis. It was, indeed, founded upon the love of God in Christ for the world, and it must be built again upon that fundamental truth as it is reflected in the larger intelligence of the time. Faith without works is dead, and the best theology that does nothing is worse than a poor theology that agonizes to save the world. Nevertheless, a living faith is the only permanent source of missionary endeavor, and the faith that is adequate to the world-enterprises now on the hands of the church must issue in wider and richer practical results. The missionary enterprise has transcended the conception in which it originated: it has led the church that inaugurated it into a new world; it has been fruitful of ideas and feelings beyond all expectation; and to-day it is largely a stupendous pedestal in the air, waiting for the new conception of the mission of God in Christ to be put under it as adequate and everlasting support.

V.

Another aspect of the religious problem of the times sums itself up in the question whether the Kingdom of the Spirit shall be regarded as an expression of the Kingdom of Christ. In other words, Is the Kingdom of the Spirit the Kingdom of the Spirit of Christ? Has the world of the Spirit escaped from the dominion of our Lord? If that is true, it means the surrender of his supreme divinity, and the abandonment of the claim that his religion is the absolute religion. The world of the Spirit is a phenomenon to be revered. In it there is much immediate agreement; there is a common philosophy for all its inhabitants. Humanity is regarded as a spiritual totality moving and having its being in the life of the Eternal. Its reality is independent of space and time; it requires neither the witness of history nor the power of argument to attest it; it is intuitively, spiritually discerned, the discovery of the higher reason, the vision of the soul alive with the divine. Human relations are defined in terms of an austere morality, society is construed as an organism subservient to an ultimate ethical purpose, and behind mankind is the Infinite with transcendent plans of grace. The ethical constitution, the ethical organization of life, and its immediate fellowship with the divine, is the high thought common to those who endeavor

to live in the Spirit. Fichte is the great apostle of this order in our century. The Kingdom of the Spirit was with him the ultimate reality, and Christianity its provincial, temporary, although sublime expression. "There is absolutely no Being and no Life beyond the immediate Divine Life. So far as we have now proceeded in our interpretation of the proem to the Johannean Gospel, we have met only with what is absolutely and eternally true. At this point begins that which possesses validity only for the time of Jesus and the establishment of Christianity, and for the necessary standpoint of the apostles, — the historical, not in any way metaphysical, proposition that this absolute and immediate existence of God, the Eternal Knowledge or Word, pure and undefiled as it is in itself, without any admixture of impurity or darkness, or any merely individual limitation, manifested itself in a personal, sensible, human existence," — in Jesus of Nazareth. Fichte distinguishes between the philosophy of the prelude to the Fourth Gospel, which is absolutely and eternally true, and the historical facts of Christianity and their interpretation by its Founder and his apostles, which are true "only from the temporary point of view of Jesus and his apostles."[1] The Kingdom of the Spirit and the Kingdom of Jesus are not, in Fichte's thought, identical; the former is the final reality,

[1] The Way towards the Blessed Life, lect. vi. pp. 381, 388.

the latter simply the greatest of its historic manifestations. This mood toward the realm of the spiritual and also toward Christianity, Carlyle inherited from Fichte. For Carlyle, the gospel is a mythus, with a transcendent expression, in the character of Jesus, of the moral order of the world. The common philosophy is the sovereignty of spiritual ideas within the limits of the natural order. The sequences of nature are the fixed and unalterable forms of the manifestation and supremacy of the Spirit; and the "God-inspired man," even at his highest, is but the symbol of the Absolute. History is but the clothes, the Idea is the reality. This is the great but one-sided thought of Carlyle's deepest work, Sartor Resartus. Emerson continues the same tradition. The moral order of the world, the Kingdom of the Spirit, is the infinite reality, and historical Christianity is the venerable and beautiful but local revelation of that. This is essentially the ground of the idealistic school in Germany, of which Pfleiderer is a distinguished representative, and of modern Unitarianism, at least in its prevailing phase. And at this point one of the deepest and most urgent of the questions of to-day is started, — Is the Kingdom of the Spirit the Kingdom of our Lord? Or has it transcended him and his conception?

For a considerable number of noble men, the answer must be given that it has. The Kingdom

of the Spirit is not the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. Christ is in it as superlative servant, but not as King. The persons to whom I refer have parted company with historic Christianity. They have found current orthodox notions utterly inadequate to the modern situation, and, having no other equally accessible means for judging historic Christianity, they have come to similar conclusions in regard to it. The Kingdom of the Spirit has in many cases cut itself free from the dominion of Christ, and that defines afresh the duty of the hour for the Christian thinker. He must show that the conception of Christ underlying the rejection is wholly inadequate; that the break has come because the Kingdom of the Spirit has been conceived in the strength of Christ without the acknowledgment of his indispensable aid; that the high philosophy originated in the discarded history, and lives mainly because rooted in the perennial vitality of the gospel. Fichte's grand characterizations of Jesus are fatal to his unhistorical idealism. "An insight into the absolute unity of the human existence with the Divine is certainly the profoundest that man can attain. Before Jesus, this knowledge had nowhere existed; and since his time, we may almost say down even to the present day, it has again been as good as rooted out and lost, at least in profane cognition. Jesus, however, was evidently in possession of this insight; as we shall incon-

testably find, were it only in the Gospel of John. How, then, came Jesus by this insight? . . . How the first discoverer, separated from centuries before him and centuries after him by the exclusive possession of this insight, did attain to it, — this is an exceeding great wonder. And so it is in fact true . . . that Jesus of Nazareth is, in a wholly peculiar manner, attributable to no one but him, the only-begotten and first-born Son of God; and that all ages, which are capable of understanding him at all, must recognize him in this character."[1] Idealism within the terms of naturalism cannot digest views so exalted of the historic Jesus. But Fichte contends "that all those who since Jesus have come into union with God have come into union with God through him. And thus it is confirmed in every way that, even to the end of time, all wise and intelligent men must bow themselves reverently before this Jesus of Nazareth; and that the more wise, intelligent, and noble they themselves are, the more humbly will they recognize the exceeding nobleness of this great and glorious manifestation of the Divine Life."[2] With this profound confession of the chief apostle of spiritual idealism before him, the Christian thinker must show that the Kingdom of the Spirit is exposed to two fatal dangers when separated from the Kingdom of Christ. The first

[1] The Way towards the Blessed Life, lect. vi. p. 390.
[2] Ibid., lect. vi. p. 391.

is the challenge of its reality from the terrible actual of the world's life. It may be real for the philosophers and mystics, but is it real for ordinary men? Are they organized in the life of the Spirit? The belief will persist only as a comforting dream, a holy hallucination, if it is permanently detached from Him who is the revealer of the order both of the Divine and the human. The faith has so much against it that, unless it returns to its original source in Christ, it cannot hope to live and prevail. The second peril concerns the breadth of this faith. It is matter of history that the broadening of creeds has usually been accompanied by a great decay of zeal on the part of believers. The consciousness of this historic fact makes many progressively inclined spirits in the present generation turn back from progress, since it seems to mean loss of interest for the sinful and the weak, — loss of the passion of sacrifice for bringing souls into the better life. As a rule, and with numerous magnificent exceptions, the incompetent in theology have been the zealots in practical helpfulness, while the masters in high theory have been indifferent to the actual state of the world's life. Unless its breadth shall be accompanied by depth and passion, the modern faith will cease to be militant. Its enthusiasm will become contemptuous pity for the accursed multitudes who know not the law, and in a generation it will die from the loss of ethical

vitality. The Kingdom of the Spirit that is not the Kingdom of the Spirit of Christ cannot live a long or a vigorous life. Bereaved of the authentication of the Divine history, and robbed of the fountains of spiritual passion that flow from the transcendent Person of the Lord, the broad theology of Unitarian, Episcopalian, and Congregationalist alike will reduce itself to a dream, and the dream will at last fail of sufficient vitality to entertain a luxurious and sleeping church.

VI.

Something approaching the total problem of the Christian thinker of to-day begins to come in sight. He is living in a world indefinitely extended in space and time. The idea of creation has undergone a marvelous transformation and expansion, and history is so different in reach and in depth to the present generation as almost to mean a new thing. The nations of the earth are no longer mere names one to another. Much of the business of mankind is cosmopolitan, and science and art and philosophy are putting on forms for the world. A Kingdom of the Spirit has risen in our day, appropriating the wealth of all faiths, grounding itself upon a noble philosophy, isolating itself from particular times and places, relying for support upon no history, however sacred, and proposing to stand in its own strength against the whole hostile world of the

actual. The question must arise whether the grand historic faith in Jesus as the Incarnate Son of God can cover this new world,— whether his sovereignty may be extended over it, whether its one great need is not the acknowledgment of his eternal authority. This is my profound belief, and out of that belief the discussion contained in the following pages has grown. The escape of our human world into the new spaces and the new times, the expansion of the material order to infinity and the extension of history to eonian periods, the gathering of the nations into the consciousness of a contemporaneous humanity, and the mighty growth of the Kingdom of the Spirit, are blessings for which it is imposible to be too thankful. Mankind have been brought out into a large place, and the daily vision is of broad rivers and streams. But unless Christ shall be installed over this new world, it will simply be a larger and more splendid corpse than the old. Over the total worlds of space, and time, and present humanity, and the spirit, he must be recognized as supreme; and these kingdoms with all their glory, if that glory is not to fade into a dream and the highest hope of mankind is not to be blasted, must become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ.

Our modern world looks as if it were getting ready for a new conception of Christ. There is gathering from all points of the compass of seri-

ous religious thought a volume of insight and appreciation of him that must finally overwhelm the public mind with the sense of his absoluteness for humanity. To one who views Niagara from a distance, the promise of all that afterwards happens that one sees in the river above is the infinitely absorbing thing. When within a mile of the end, the great river grows serious, everything begins to mean something; there is hurry, and leap to right and left, tumultuous movement, with a darker frown settling over it, — a setting of the current toward the one grand centre, a gathering and massing of the waters for some magnificent purpose, a rolling together in a sort of terrible joy in anticipation of the final stupendous plunge. The cataract is constituted by the tremendous crowding and pushing from above; the van of the river must leap into the abyss; the force back of it is simply irresistible. Something like this I think I see in reference to the coming acceptance of Christ's absoluteness for mankind. Everywhere the vision is opening to the reality of his presence in the world. The old Christ conception is becoming new in the current thoughts, insights, and appreciations of the time. There is a gathering of discernment toward this great centre. No one knew what direct appeal to God meant to the men of the sixteenth century until Luther's words revealed it, and few men to-day have any adequate sense

of what Christ means to the world. Some day, some voice or book will make the world aware of what is even now lying deep in its heart. Christ is the creator of our human world. The worth of the individual, the reality of social union, the sanctity of home, the infinite meaning of love, the eternal validity of our ideas of righteousness, freedom, and God, all the ultimate realities of our human world, are the creation of Christ. We are born into his world; we wake and sleep, work and rest, rejoice and weep, live and die in it.

> "Through Him the first fond prayers are said,
> Our lips of childhood frame;
> The last low whispers of our dead
> Are burdened with his name."

And this consciousness that Christ cannot be transcended — that, as the form of religious thought, the inspiration to religious feeling, the ideal for religious character, and the mould in which the ultimate philosophy of the universe must be run, he is absolute for humanity — will force itself before very long into some new and epoch-making expression.

VII.

What manner of man he must be, who is to give epoch-making expression to the new consciousness of Christ, it is not difficult to imagine. He must know the method of physical science, and be in sympathy with its great generalizations;

he must be at home in the kingdom of thought, familiar with the noble and fruitful ideas in philosophy, a companion of the imperial thinkers of the race; he must have at his tongue's end the salient facts of Christian history, and the fundamental conceptions and distinctions of historic theology; he must be a master of the new biblical learning, widely and deeply versed in the classical literatures of the world, and able to work in the consciousness of the true interpretation of the religions of the world; and, in addition to all this, he must have original power. For this apparatus of learning is but the introduction to such work as to-day needs to be done. In many men there are approaches to the necessary scholarship; but what one longs for, as the gift of God to our time, is some one with eyes for the infinite meaning of the faith that believers have inherited, of the conceptions under which they are living, of the realities from which they are deriving the strength and hope of existence. There never was such an opportunity for scholarship as now, and never a time when mere learning was so impotent. The stuff of which faith and life and civilizations are made is here, and we need eyes for the adequate appreciation and use of the stuff. The loudest call is not for the venturesome spirit who shall ascend into heaven to bring Christ down, or descend into the depths to bring Christ up, but for the man who shall

fathom the significance of the Word that is nigh our humanity. There is little hope for the profounder and more vital ascertainment of the content of the Christ fact and conception, unless there shall be sent from God a man with the gift of sight. The Christian world is waiting for him: it may have to wait many years; but when the fullness of the time shall have come, he will appear. He will possess the equipment of learning to which reference has been made, and he will sound with his sympathies the great heart of the present, fathom the depths of its spirit, and surprise the world with new revelations of the eternal realities of Christian faith.

Until this great man shall come, little men must do with their might whatsoever their hands find to do. Thankful for whatever fraction of the ideal equipment in learning and in insight they may possess, they must stand to the task of the time with fidelity and hope. More good will result from a small attempt that is honest than from no attempt at all. The intellectual weariness that bids men rest, that tells them that the story has already been told for the ten thousandth time, that induces indifference by the remark that if told again no one will listen to it, is always a symptom of degeneration. There is reality, infinite reality, in the universe, food for perpetual wonder, for ever-advancing discoveries and ever-richer communion. While the universe

remains infinite, and while the Christian religion continues to be the religion of the Infinite, all that is needed for the surprise and zest of continuous discovery is the pure heart and the single eye. The great painting requires the best light: it is the day that reveals it; and it is time, transmuted into the luminous consciousness of the successive generations of believers, that brings out the infinite meaning of Christianity.

VIII.

The foregoing reflections disclose the motive of this book. We find ourselves in the heart of a Christian inheritance of overwhelming wealth. It is the task of this as of every generation to ascertain its value, and to use its full dynamic resources. To understand the old in the light of the new is the most difficult and at the same time the most urgent of undertakings. In particular, the highest conception at which humanity has arrived is the conception of Christ; the conception of God follows that, and is conditioned by it. We can never transcend it any more than we can go beyond the order of the world. We can only enter into a generous rivalry in the endeavor to fathom its infinite significance for mankind. This the author has tried to do, in such form as the limits of the discussion imposed. If the course of thought shall serve in any measure to direct the minds of theological students

and our younger ministers to the wealth of content in the Christ fact and conception, to excite in them the desire to explore it more deeply, and to concentrate many different intellects upon the most remunerating and hopeful of all studies, the author will feel that the publication of this book is more than justified.

This raises the question concerning the class of persons for whom the author has written. The answer must be, for all those who feel the greatness of the common Christian inheritance, and who at the same time are at a loss to understand its meaning for the generation to which they belong. There are thousands in our midst who long to hear the wonderful words of God in their own tongue. Into the dialect of present thought the meaning of the Divine Wonder must be put. The understanding, burdened with the sense of the infiniteness of the Christian message, must coöperate with the living spirit. For the most part, then, the persons addressed in this discussion are those who have not broken with historic Christianity, who stand in the consciousness of its grandeur and finality, but who desire a better understanding of that which holds them with a grasp so beneficent. If any of my Unitarian friends should read what I have written, let me here make plain the fact that I am not trying to raise from the dead a deeply and decently buried controversy. It is the duty of the Unitarian, as

surely as it is mine, to endeavor to ascertain the worth of our common Christian inheritance; and if upon the central part of this vast bequest — the Person of Christ — we differ in our estimates, it must strengthen him in his own conclusion to see it victorious against mine. Perhaps this consciousness of the duty resting upon Unitarian and Trinitarian alike, to open up afresh the whole question of the significance of Christianity, may subdue both from the mood of self-confident controversialists to the temper of patient and reverent thinkers. Any words of mine bearing upon Unitarianism are written, I trust it is needless to say, in honor and gratitude for the great movement of thought whose power for good has been so vast, but from whose conception of Christ I differ. Mutual recognition is the basis of all fruitful discussion. As a tenacious Trinitarian, I rejoice to recognize the benefit to the Christian church of the Unitarian contention. No intelligent religious person can fail to honor its insistence upon the Fatherhood of God, the real and therefore the divine humanity of our Lord, the function of history as a revelation of God, the place of the Bible at the centre of religious history, and salvation as a moral process under the Spirit of God. Against a Trinitarianism that was tritheism, in opposition to a view of the Person of Christ that slighted his humanity and dishonored the Eternal Father, in the face of opinions

that made history godless and terrible; that construed salvation as outward, forensic, mechanical; that regarded religion as alien to the nature of man, at war with the intellectual and moral wealth of the world, and that turned it into a provincial and deformed thing, — the Unitarian protest was wholesome, magnificent, providential. On the other hand, the ceaseless assertion, in the face of militant Unitarianism, of the enlightened Trinitarian's conception of God, his search for the basis in the Infinite for human society, his construction of the Person of Christ, his view of the differentiating character of the Bible and history within the Christian church, his persistent plea for the meaning of an outraged conscience, his appeal for an authentic and authenticated Mediator of the Eternal Pity, his proclamation of obedience to Christ as the path to spiritual freedom, the exalted personalism in which his ideas have lived, and the contagious enthusiasm with which he has expounded them, have doubtless told for good upon his stout theological antagonist, and constitute a tradition of faith of the utmost significance. Whoever enters into both these moods, whoever studies both these traditions, if he is a deep-hearted man and alive to the sublime reach of his Christian inheritance, will feel the call as from God, whether he be Unitarian or Trinitarian or neither, to fathom to a lower depth, and explore on a wider scale, the unsearch-

able riches of Christ. To such a man, whatever his name or order, I would venture to repeat the invitation of the Hebrew singer, burdened as it is with the meaning, the privilege, and the hope of this new day: —

> "O magnify the Lord with me,
> And let us exalt his name together!" [1]

[1] Psalm xxxiv. 3.

CHAPTER II.

CHRIST IN THE FAITH OF TO-DAY.

τί ὑμιν δοκεῖ περὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ. — MATT. XXII. 42.

"The present age may be characterized as the Age of Criticism, — a criticism to which everything is obliged to submit. Religion on the ground of its sacredness, and Law on the ground of its majesty, not uncommonly attempt to escape this necessity. But by such efforts they inevitably awaken a just suspicion of the soundness of their foundation, and they lose all their claim to the unfeigned homage paid by reason to that which has shown itself able to stand the test of free inquiry." — KANT, quoted in Edward Caird's *Critical Philosophy*, vol. i. p. 1.

"Criticism is always the result of the fact that the intelligence has found its way blocked by some difficulty, which has awakened a suspicion against the universal applicability of the categories or methods which it has been using. In this sense criticism was at the birth of science, and it has mediated every transition to a new point of view." — EDWARD CAIRD'S *Critical Philosophy*, vol. i. p. 42.

"The most distinctive and determinative element in modern theology is what we may term a new feeling for Christ. By this feeling its specific character is at once defined and expressed. But we feel him more in our theology because we know him better in history." — A. M. FAIRBAIRN, *The Place of Christ in Modern Theology*, p. 3.

"Christ is no such theophany, no such casual, unhistorical being, as the Jehovah angel who visited Abraham. He is in and of the race, born of a woman, living in the line of humanity, subject to human conditions, an integral part, in one view, of the world's history; only bringing into it, and setting in organific union with it, the Eternal Life." — HORACE BUSHNELL, *God in Christ*, p. 165.

CHAPTER II.

CHRIST IN THE FAITH OF TO-DAY.

THE old-fashioned officialism of the Christian teacher is gone, the functional authority of the priest is at an end, the mere calling of the prophet is no longer a passport to power. The writer who in these days appears in behalf of his Master can hope to prevail only through the energy of his ideas and the nobility of his purpose. The Christian teacher has lost much, but he has gained infinitely more. This gain is part of a universal gain. The artistic spirit that moves in our century, and that irresistibly impels every man whose calling has within it any of the higher possibilities to establish between it and his spirit a sacred relationship, has brought into existence a nobler purpose, a profounder sincerity, a larger vitality, and a certain mystic charm in the whole business of living. Here and there a voice grows indignant over what it calls the preaching of the age; but the truth is, in the characteristic literature of our time, preaching is universal, that is, all the higher forms of intellectual activity are carried forward with supreme reference to human welfare. The typical man

to-day glories in his vocation, strives to subdue it to the higher necessities of his life, toils to get from it food for his heart no less than for his body, works over it that he may raise it into a large and beautiful utterance of his humanity. This modern emphasis upon the vocation of man is but the note of the artistic spirit under the inspiration of moral good. In all our typical thinking, the ethical good is the goal, and the intellectual enterprises characteristic of our time are adjusted to this with as much precision as the telescope to the star. In consequence of this new mood, philosophy has become the reasoned expression of the philosopher's life, and "the quarrel of long standing between poetry and philosophy" bids fair to issue in complete reconciliation. Science, too, is becoming more human every day. She is the vocation of certain master spirits, and by the purity of their devotion, and the forms she is made to assume in their hands, she becomes a fine art. Science is invested with new charm because her version of fact bears so powerfully upon human society. In justification of this remark, reference may be made to the scientific literature of the century. "The Origin of Species" is quickly followed by "The Descent of Man." Evolution, as a generalization from the facts of nature, soon appears as the source of a new history of mankind. Evolutional science stands distinguished for its human interest and

its prophetic power. Scientific books, of the influential class, have been constructed very much upon the pattern of the old-fashioned theological sermon, — first the doctrinal part, and then the practical; first the intellectual principle, and then the application: and as with the sermon, so with the scientific treatise, the discussion was undertaken and carried forward for the sake of the moral or immoral lesson. Even the supposed inhuman science of political economy is no exception. As Professor Marshall says: "Ethical forces are among those of which the economist has to take account. Attempts have indeed been made to construct an abstract science with regard to the actions of an 'economic man' who is under no ethical influences, and who pursues pecuniary gain warily and energetically, but mechanically and selfishly. But they have never been successful. No one could be relied on better than the economic man to endure toil and sacrifice with the unselfish desire to make provision for his family; and his normal motives have always been tacitly assumed to include the family affections. But if these motives are included, why not also all other altruistic motives, the action of which is so far uniform in any class, at any time and place, that it can be reduced to general rule?"[1] In a word, life is the great finality in our century, and out of its perplexities and possibilities

[1] Principles of Political Economy. Preface to first edition, p. x.

all the higher forms of rational activity have grown, and to it they return for judgment.[1] Thus the artistic spirit, which is essentially a preaching spirit, is going from strength unto strength. The typical thinkers are everywhere doing their work in veneration of human life, and their highest hope is fixed upon a beneficent ministry to mankind.

Bereaved, or rather let it be said mercifully relieved, of all the officialism of his profession,

[1] This characteristic of the greater literary activity of the century, what Matthew Arnold would call its high seriousness, is self-evident. The most artistic of all Victorian poets — Tennyson — draws his inspiration from life, and the distinct, premeditated end of his art is a beautiful ministry to life. However the literary fraternity may dislike the statement or resent the imputation, the fact remains, that all great poetry is great preaching. It is illumination and inspiration for man in his human relations. What differentiates the literary movement that began with Carlyle and Emerson, from the superficial and worthless critical work that immediately preceded it, is its ethical insight and purpose. To these two writers we are indebted more than to all others, for carrying into literature the ethical impulse, and for measuring the productions of genius by ethical standards. Matthew Arnold was nothing more or less than a gifted commentator upon literature, an admirable preacher, who took his texts from unconventional quarters. The same remark applies to Ruskin, and indeed to all the greater spirits in the characteristic literary movement of the century. The pith of it all is the preaching of righteousness, the application of noble ideas to life. At present a new school has risen that knows not Joseph, and its life is likely to resemble that of Pharaoh under the plagues, and the waves of the Red Sea. Meanwhile, innocent Egypt must suffer from Ibsen and his set, and poor Israel face a new oppressor.

the Christian teacher glories in his vocation. It is to him what the flute or harp was to the wandering minstrel in ancient times, — a thing inseparable from his being, his sweet companion in hours of solitude, the instrument through which he poured gladness into the hearts of the poor and sorrowing, revealed the privilege and informed the zest of happier existence, and set forth the whole sublime mystery of man's struggle in this world; the voice, too, that carried his own thought and feeling into the presence of the Infinite. This new relation of calling to life, in the case of the Christian teacher, must raise the deepest questions. There will be the vital subjective question of purpose, ambition, sincerity, intensity, — the question that demands a certain prophetic nobility in the attitude and tone of the soul. Then will come the great objective question as to the truth to be taught, the ideas to be communicated, the place that Christ occupies in the faith of the teacher, and the place that he should occupy in the faith of the time.

There is, we are told, a Christ of yesterday, a Christ of to-day, and a Christ of the endless future. Through these three grand divisions of time, men look up and behold the unchanging countenance of the Christ of God. Still permanence does not mean monotony, and therefore the Christ of to-day must have the deepest interest for the men of to-day. The Eternal takes on

new meaning for mankind as it looks through the sum-total of the conditions amid which men are actually living. While one glories in the Christ of history, and lifts one's self to greet the Christ of the future, it is one's special privilege to behold Christ in the struggles and hopes of this generation. The subject of this book is the eternal Christ as the Christ of to-day, and in the present chapter we are to consider him as he stands in the faith of our time.

I.

It is a vast comfort to remember that Christ is already here, that his energy is at work upon the life of the world. The largest hopefulness may nourish itself upon the great utterance of the apostle: "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not."[1] The divine order of the world is here from the morning of creation; it waits for the recognition of mankind; and, although embarrassed by human ignorance, it is still doing its work. Nothing is truer than that life ever goes before, and is ever greater than, the comprehending intellect. The outward world has done a quite infinite work for the individual mind before it occurs to it to ask about its reality. Color and form are present from the beginning, bewitching the eye and giving radiance to feeling; the forces and the melodies of

[1] John i. 10.

nature do their best work while the young soul is alive with receptivity and the ear is in devout self-surrender. The music of the running brook, the freshness of the meadow, the solemn expanse of lake and sea, the gloom and grandeur of valley and mountain, the ineffable outgoings of morning and evening, the sublime procession of the stars, reach the heart from the first, form the intellect from its earliest awakening, carry into the mental life from its birth an atmosphere, a color, and tone and power that defy analysis. The fibres of man's being grow finer and less perceptible as they leave the centres behind; and they reach out to infinity, ramify among the deepest mysteries of the universe, and entwine themselves with the God who speaks to him both from without and from within. The world, the outward world, is an incalculable power upon life, — physical, æsthetic, intellectual, — long before it becomes a problem to the reason. Because of its prior standing in life, in virtue of the rich human interests that subsist upon its bounty and that refresh themselves from its beauty, the outward world becomes a living question for the scientific intellect. In the same way Christ comes before the minds of men to-day. There was possible, at one time, an outside opinion of Christ. Whom do men say that I am? Jesus was interested in the merely speculative opinion concerning him among the leaders of thought in his generation.

Of course he regarded, as every one must, all merely outside notions as worthless, except for their human interest. When Jesus turned and said to his disciples, But whom say ye that I am? he appealed from the mere intellect to the intellect operating upon a basis of life, — from the understanding working upon an object outside the circle of its interests and loves to a mind in the ranges of whose intuition the material for an adequate judgment was already present. It was because of his prior standing in the life of his disciples that Jesus expected from them an approximately adequate judgment about himself.

Now this is of course infinitely more the character of our time. For nearly two thousand years Christ has had standing in the life of the race. The stream of his thought has been enriching all the centuries; the sound of his voice has never died away; the ideals that he embodied have been the guiding star of our higher civilization; his example has been the alluring and unforgetable picture hung in the memory and sympathy of all the great religious leaders since he lived, and his spirit has been unceasingly at work upon humanity. Instinct, habit moral and intellectual, custom and law, institution domestic, civic, and religious, the whole sweep of our civilization, has been played upon, awakened, and informed, wrought over from its first estate, and, in spite of continuous and brutal resistance,

charged with the power of Christ. To abstract Christ from our civilization would be to take the sun out of the heavens, the soul out of the body. What we should have left would be a frozen humanity, a dead symbol with the reality forever gone. I repeat, therefore, that it is because of the prior and mighty standing which Christ has in the life of the world that he becomes for each new generation a problem for the reason.

The wonderful thing about the letters which compose so large a part of the New Testament is the overwhelming consciousness of Christ that one finds in them. The writers are flooded with Christ. Their thoughts spontaneous and deliberate, their beliefs old and new, their ideals and enthusiasms, their uplook into heaven and their outlook upon the earth, are but different versions of the dominating soul of their Master. The whole movement of their existence is penetrated by his presence. It is as if some great river had been touched in all its fountains, and sweetened in all its tributaries by a perfume from heaven, so that henceforth the volume of its waters is but the moving body of that mighty, fragrant spirit. The stream of the apostolic consciousness is thus filled and transformed by Christ. These men are believers in God, but they are believers in God through Christ; they preach the love of God to the nations, but it is the love of God in

Christ; they look for a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, but it is the righteousness of God in Christ. The New Testament writers are in captivity to their Lord; they are his bond-servants; his empire over them is something amazing, and without a parallel in human history. Through these writers we behold an entire generation in the rapture of a great love. These multitudinous lovers can think of nothing, can talk of nothing, can dream of nothing, except in the line of their sublime and devouring passion. Out of that mood came the thought of the ascendency, the divinity, the essential deity, of their Master. The apostolic faith in the deity of Christ was an outgrowth of his sovereignty over apostolic life.

More wonderful still is the fact that our whole Western civilization is under the spell of the same Presence. Not indeed so intensely, nor so nobly, but yet as truly, as in the apostolic age, is our entire Western civilization under the dominating consciousness of Christ. I venture the statement that it is almost as impossible to think of God and man and human society, through any other medium than Christ, as it is to look up at the stars, or abroad upon the earth, in any other way than through the world's enfolding atmosphere. Our whole thought of God and man; our entire working philosophy of life; our modes of intellectual vision, types of feeling, habits of will; our

instinctive, customary, rational, emotional, institutional, and social existence, — is everywhere encompassed and interpenetrated by Christ. His empire over our civilization is complete in this sense, that it exists and expands only under his power, and cannot define or describe itself except in terms of his teaching and character. We are here under the shadow of an Infinite Name; we are living and dying in the heart of an enfolding Presence. We are compelled to acknowledge that the secret moulding energy of our entire civilization is the mind of Christ. It is out of this consciousness of the indwelling, wide-spreading, and overruling mind of Christ that the belief comes in his essential deity. The sign of his supremacy is everywhere. When our Western world thinks of infanthood and motherhood, it still beholds him in the arms of Mary. When men look upon the loveliness of childhood, they are under the spell of his words, "Suffer the little children, and forbid them not to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."[1] When they rejoice in the glory of youth, they behold again Jesus fixing his divine look upon the young ruler, and pouring over him the tides of a consecrating love; when they go to the wedding, the marriage feast at Cana of Galilee is before them; when they walk to the house of sorrow, they are under his shadow who comforted the mourners in Beth-

[1] Matt. xix. 14.

any, and who opened the grave of Lazarus; when they revere and trust God, it is his God whom they revere and trust; when they strive to bring in a better day for humanity, it is his kingdom that they seek; when they hate sin, it is the vital denial of the Highest that he showed to be so fearful; when they abhor hypocrisy, the image in their thoughts is that of the Pharisee whom his scorn transfixed; when they loathe treachery, it is Judas Iscariot of whom they think; when they speak of the moral order of the universe, and the recompense of the just and the unjust, it is the heaven and the hell of his teaching that mankind have in mind. The whole noble movement of Western civilization and the entire mass of its baseness have upon them the mark of the Lord. The truth of life is his truth, and its conventionalities, respectabilities, shams and hypocrisies, disguise themselves in the lustre of his words. The total Western world is under his sovereignty. When the sun is descending clear and with unshorn glory, and one looks fixedly upon the flaming orb for even a few moments, after one has turned away the image remains, and, upon whatever object the eyes rest, one still beholds the persistent form of the great sun. Christ has once for all fixed the attention of the world upon himself, and henceforth it can never get his divine form out of its vision. He is imprinted forever upon the mental retina of the race, and one must

continue to look upon the soul, and human society, and God himself, with eyes that have Christ burned into their substance. A fact like this wields an elemental power over the conceptions that Christian thinkers frame as to the dignity of their Master. Christology is not born of imagination: it is a serious attempt to give adequate explanation to an indisputable fact. Account for this omnipresent Christ, for this name that conditions our civilization, for this life that our world cannot transcend, apart from his deity, believers in him feel that they cannot.

II.

One great tendency of the time, even among those who have not broken with the past, and who are in the line of historic discipleship, is to rest in an ethical Christ, asking no questions of a metaphysical nature, and in fact denying their pertinence and importance. The ethical passion of the Ritschlian school in Germany gives it a vast power over the young soul in its glowing, impatient initial Christian experience. It comes in the name of what is felt, and it brushes aside as irrelevant a host of things that seem full of hard problems for the student. One must sympathize to a considerable extent with this movement on its native soil. When on the one hand speculation has become, what it is so apt to become in Germany, extreme and almost a disease,

and when on the other traditional orthodoxy has become incredible, a return to experience and the Christ of the heart, such as the modern Ritschlians represent, must be wholesome and indeed providential. But it may be all this and yet be far enough from adequacy. Among ourselves, whether for better or for worse, the same tendency is growing. In the minds of the younger men, one finds metaphysical infirmity and agnosticism joined with the sincerest homage in the presence of Jesus. The purely ethical apprehension of Christ is coming to be the fashion, the moral picture of him in the Gospels, the image of him in feeling and in social reform, while across the sunless wastes of thought no shadow of him can be discovered. The Holy Spirit is assumed to have to do only with the needs of the heart; revelation is conceived to be of eternal life; and dogma is but the product of the human understanding, giving, and giving necessarily, an intellectual form to its spiritual life. This type of opinion, wherever it appears, rejoices in the ethical element in the Gospels ; is fond of contrasting primitive Christianity with that developed in the course of the centuries; hints or declares, according to the temperament and environment of the writer, that the evolution in creed is but an alien accretion; and announces that the original divine message was of a transcendent ethical Personality founding a kingdom through the in-

fluence of life rather than the power of ideas. A distinction is made, and insisted upon as fundamental, between moral Christology and metaphysical, and it is implied or contended, as the case may be, that there is no material in the trustworthy evangelical narrative for a metaphysical construction of the person of Jesus. In the strong words of a recent writer, it is held that "it is impossible for any one, whether he be a student of history or no, to fail to notice a difference of both form and content between the Sermon on the Mount and the Nicene Creed. The Sermon on the Mount is the promulgation of a new law of conduct; it assumes beliefs rather than formulates them; the theological conceptions which underlie it belong to the ethical rather than the speculative side of theology; metaphysics are wholly absent. The Nicene Creed is a statement partly of historical facts, and partly of dogmatic inferences; the metaphysical terms which it contains would probably have been unintelligible to the first disciples; ethics have no place in it. The one belongs to a world of Syrian peasants, the other to a world of Greek philosophers."[1] One could not wish for a franker statement of the supposed antithesis between moral and metaphysical Christianity. The quotation is made, not for the purpose of refuting the generalization of Dr. Hatch, but for the sake of defin-

[1] Dr. Hatch, *The Hibbert Lectures*, 1888, p. 1.

ing the class to whom reference is made. In the statement of the Hibbert lecturer there is a breadth and power that make it representative. There is abundant room for an answer in detail to a series of remarks so sweeping, considered as the utterance of an individual scholar; but it is more in accordance with the purpose of this discussion to regard them in their representative character.

There are various reasons why this view should be popular. In the first place, its great and just emphasis upon eternal life as the final thing in the gospel message, and the supreme thing in the religious spirit, must exercise a powerful attraction. There is a vast positive here, around which all believers will willingly assemble, as men gather about a great fire in midwinter. In the second place, it is an easy view. It puts no problem before the Christian intellect of an overmastering kind. It excommunicates philosophy from the household of faith, and sometimes, as in the Ritschlian metaphysics, calls it in to discredit metaphysics, undertakes to make philosophical theology commit suicide. Then, again, to reject the grand historic construction of the Person of Christ, and to rest in a metaphysical negative regarding him, serves as a cover for the real opinion that one may not have the courage to avow. The New Testament is treated with the boldest freedom by modern methods of inter-

pretation, and students in these days feel that it is very difficult indeed to make out just how far the supernatural in the way of the miraculous enters into the genuine evangelical narrative. Further, a certain skeptical mood reigns with reference to all so-called interruptions of the law of uniformity. The miraculous is quietly ruled out, or left to fall from the tree of faith like a dead leaf: the ethical alone is real and imperishable; all else is but the legendary dress of the hour.[1]

Now all this seems to me but a passing phase of religious thought, a sign of intellectual uncertainty and immaturity, an evidence of the lack of thoroughness upon a fundamental problem of Christian faith. If indeed the ethical Christ is held to give us the metaphysical, if the apprehension of Christ through moral feeling is but the method of reaching his true character, his ultimate and universal importance, his final relation

[1] The convergence upon the ethical Christ from quarters the most opposite is one of the most interesting studies of to-day. The naturalistic writer, Pfleiderer, rests in the moral Christ; the Ritschlian does the same; while philosophical writers like Edward Caird move toward a similar goal. The idealism that works through the established order of nature, and that abhors the idea of the transcendence of nature implied in miracle; the school of feeling, and the dynamics of life, and that detests the presence of metaphysics in religion as that of an alien; and the professional Hegelian metaphysician, give one substantially the same Christ. They emphasize the character, and leave the subject of it an enigma, or reduce him wholly to the human category.

to God and to man, it is something deserving the profoundest respect. The ethical method is the way to the heart of Christ, the way to the heart of the universe. But, in this sense of the term, the ethical reaches and holds within it the ultimate reality; while the form of opinion which seems to me superficial is that which substitutes the Christ of feeling for the Christ of truth. It must never be forgotten that the word "ethical" is a term of character and not of being; that it is descriptive of quality and not of the reality; that it calls attention to the inner habit and the outward conduct, while it leaves undefined the personal soul that is the living source of all. The moral attributes of Christ may be, as I thoroughly believe they are, the only open path to a true appreciation of his nature; but it must be affirmed that Christ is something more than his exalted ethical character. There is a personal centre and source of the thought, and the feeling, and the purpose, and the acts that reveal him: that personal living centre is the ultimate and real Christ; and that ultimate and real Christ may be measured against God and against man, and his place in relation to both approximately ascertained. It is impossible to account for character in any human being without the assumption of a personal spirit whose character it is. Character must be the character of some one; and Christ is not merely an exalted ethical habit, but

a being to whom that exalted ethical habit belongs. The classic illustration of Alice in Wonderland must here be repeated. A cat without a grin one can conceive, but a grin without a cat is impossible. A personal being without exalted ethical habit is possible enough, but an exalted ethical habit without a personal being as the source of it is unthinkable. Wherever one sees a smile, one finds a face wearing it; and wherever one discovers character, one beholds a personal being bearing it. For ethics without metaphysics it is difficult to have any real respect. Here are the common relations of mankind, — husband and wife, parent and child, citizen and man. Here are personal beings in a certain order of relationship. The ethics of humanity are the outcome of the metaphysics of humanity; the moral habits and acts of the race have their source in the moral being of the race. The ethical character of Christ, the ethical character of God, implies the personal reality of Christ, the personal reality of God. Beneath the sublime phenomenon of moral worth in all its forms there is being; and the promise whose perpetual fulfillment is the support of the moral order of the world is the old one, "the Eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath thee are the everlasting arms."[1] One can sooner build a house without foundations, lay railroad tracks in the air, or enable the ocean to dispense with its

[1] Deut. xxxiii. 27.

bed in the heart of the earth, than to erect an enduring ethical scheme of humanity apart from the reality of God and the personal soul of the individual man. Feeling viewed as the foundation of thought is great; considered as the raw material of rational life, the intuition that gives the very impact upon the heart of the supreme spiritual Presence, it is to be regarded with veneration. There are no words sufficient to celebrate its praise. Men are allowed to have these unsounded depths where God is evermore at work, and it is permissible, and indeed necessary, to appeal to the unfathomable life which is the gift of God. But feeling used as a substitute for reason is one of the least worthy of things. It is giving a stone for bread, a scorpion for an egg. For what is the use of feeling when its rational value is no longer ascertainable? The worst sort of subjectivity, the hopeless circle of the log in the whirlpool, is involved in the easy substitution of the merely ethical Christ for the Christ both ethical and real.

The greatest objection, however, to this entire mode of thought is, that it puts asunder what God has joined together, — life and philosophy. Its assumption, conscious or unconscious, that the Holy Spirit is not concerned in the development of theological thought, nor manifest in the intellectual evolution of mankind, is the superlative heresy of our generation. The easy way in which

it is taken for granted that life yields the immediate and perfect intuition of God, and that the interpretations, the rational constructions, of this life are wholly of man's device, is extraordinary. For the Divine Spirit must be concerned with the sum of human interests, he must be in the whole activity of man; otherwise the conclusion is inevitable that humanity is utterly destitute of his presence. The distinction between religion and theology, between the forces of the spiritual life and the operations and results of reflective thought, is valid; but the inference from this difference, that the God who is the helper of the heart in its distress is not also the guide of the intellect in its perplexities, is unwarrantable. The serious and noble life of the world, both on its rational and on its moral sides, is the product, through imperfect human personalities, of the Eternal Spirit. Thought is as sovereign in Christ as feeling, the prophetic office as the priestly. Indeed, the best single characterization of Jesus would be the teacher. Everything depends upon the validity of his thought of God, his conception of the soul, his ideal for human society, his vision of a universe passionately sympathetic toward man in his hunger and thirst after righteousness. The metaphysics of Jesus are absolutely essential to his ethics; his characterization of the ultimate realities in heaven and in earth, to his practical ministry. If his thought is a dream, his endeavor for man is a delusion.

The same remark applies to the rest of the New Testament. The first thing that impresses one in reading the Epistles is the supremacy of the prophetic mind. They are charged with thought, these apostles of the Lord. Granted that they fall short of the mind of their Master, they also fail no less signally in the reproduction of his life. Imperfection is part of their nature, but it is as conspicuous in their character as in their philosophy. If these writings are precious for the spirit that they enshrine, they are equally grand for the scheme of the universe, and man's place in it, that is implicit in them all, and that in some of them receives even monumental expression. To say that it is conceivable that, some day in the far future, the church may transcend apostolic thought, is at once granted; but it is likewise thinkable, and indeed not at all unlikely, that believers ages hence may transcend the fullness and glory of apostolic life. If the church is ever carried so far in her thought, it will be on the strength of the Holy Spirit; if she is ever lifted so high in her life, it will be by the same Divine Helper. The intellectual and moral aspects of Christianity, whether as found in Jesus or as seen in his immediate followers, are the aspects of the one undivided truth.

Christian history has, within the present generation, been subjected to a new operation. What is termed the scientific analysis of the his-

tory of Christianity has been undertaken. The initial assumption is that the religion of Jesus is a fixed quantity; that it can be definitely characterized, if not measured, as it goes forth into the world from his spirit; and that it can be traced, in the general stream of historic opinion, tradition, institution, ritual, and life, as a distinct current. This certainly is an interesting line of investigation, and cannot fail to exhibit in a fresh way the many contributions which have been made from many sources toward the grand compound of historic Christianity. But the new study becomes serious when one discovers that it is undertaken, in many instances at least, in the interest of a certain type of theology. If it can be shown, as it certainly can, that Greek philosophy, and Stoic preaching, and Roman law, institution, and ritual went to the formation of early Christianity, it is assumed that these contributions are alien elements, — discolorations of the stream of the primitive faith, which, now that it is flowing through the fine white sand of exhaustive historical analysis, is regaining its original purity. It is this assumption that must be resisted; for it amounts to the denial of the worth of history, and the negation of Christianity as the religion of the Absolute Spirit. The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; and a living religion, like a living man, must subsist upon the food available for it in the historic process.

Christianity is the Holy Spirit of assimilation and growth, and its task is to redeem the intellectual treasure of the world, no less than its vital; to gather together from the four winds of heaven the elect thoughts of mankind; to build into itself all the truth and all the love in the world, and to carry them onward to their perfect forms. Historic analysis for the sake of a deeper insight into the original vital principle of Christian thought and life, and in the interest of a profounder homage to that which must be the standard for all development, the mind and heart of the Lord, is worthy of all honor. Historic analysis for the purpose of showing the alien origin of a given form of Christian thought, and with the hope that the result may be an entire discrediting of all endeavors after a rational theology, is vitiated by its animus, and doomed by its collision with man's ineradicable belief that he is living in an intelligible universe.

The reason given for refusing to recognize reflective thought as essential to Christianity is that most of its historic forms have been transcended. Poor psychology and poor metaphysics disfigure the annals of the church. We cannot hope, so it is contended, to do more than repeat the unavailing efforts of Origen and Athanasius, Tertullian and Augustine. That which can be transcended cannot be an essential part of religion. Now this argument proves too much; for

it applies equally to ethics, and indeed to the whole life of these Christian centuries. The moral problem, the problem of the conscience, has been as far from solution, the eonian search for righteousness for the individual and society has been as far from finality, as has been the case with the question of reason. If we abandon theology because it lies in its nature to be transcended, we must abandon life, for an equal imperfection lies upon all its forms. Life is indeed deeper infinitely than the intellect, but its ethical problem is still as far from solution as is the rational problem. To live the perfect life is at present as impossible as it is to have all knowledge. We know in part, and out of that partial knowledge build our theologies; we are not perfected in love, and out of that imperfection we construct our lives. If the note of incompleteness discredits thought, it must also discredit life.

The Christian idea of the Holy Spirit would seem to make impossible this denial of the worth of history, both on its intellectual and on its moral sides. The tasks of the reason and of the conscience are infinite; they are nothing less than the knowledge and love of God reproduced in human life. The problems of truth and righteousness are the problems of the Divine Spirit, and he will solve both through the historic process. The man who undertakes to do the work of an entire age, like some father of the higher

criticism or some theologian who would stereotype thought for the church for all time, is foreordained to failure. Nations and ages have their work, and it is too vast for other hands. Humanity has its task, and only humanity can accomplish it; rather let us say that the Eternal Spirit has his task in the revelation of the mind and heart of God to mankind, and only God, operating through the entire term of history, can achieve God's work. The moral faith cannot long survive the death of the rational; the trust that is not overcome before the vital obligation set forth in the august and almost incredible words, "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect,"[1] depends upon the confidence that accepts the privilege of knowing the love of Christ that passeth knowledge.[2] Knowledge and character, truth and righteousness, are equally impossible as finalities in time; they are humanity's task for eternity.

III.

Taking now a wider view of the faith of our time, we can see that certain great advances have been made in the proper intellectual appreciation of the Person of our Lord. His representative value manward was never so clearly discerned as now. It is one of the magnificent commonplaces of the Christian teaching of the time that, in

[1] Matt. v. 48. [2] Eph. iii. 19.

obedience to the Divine Will and in self-sacrifice among men, Jesus is our supreme example. There is in him a mighty imitable, reproducible character. The imitation of Christ is the task of humanity. His followers are those who are seeking to become what he was; his disciples are the men who are trying to learn the art of right living from him.

This truth, now a commonplace of Christian faith, has again and again been almost lost from the consciousness of the church, and that, too, for long periods of time. The Augustinian thought so emphasized the evil in human nature as to call for a conscious crisis in the life of the individual before he could think of himself, without additional sin, as a candidate for the purity and elevation of the New Testament morality. The sense of sin burdened the conscience with the duty of confession. Even Augustine's greatest book — that by which he has spoken to the deepest in man, that by which he speaks to the heart of to-day — has this great defect, that it makes the confessional element too prominent in the duty of the Christian life. The confessional character is in all true faith; for how can man measure his poor actual against the ideal without the feeling of utter humiliation? And it must ever remain a comfort to express in hymn and prayer, in secret meditation and solitary dialogue with God, one's sense of nothingness in the pres-

ence of ideal excellence. If one is an honest man, one will crave the privilege of confession upon discovering the fact that one's life is far away from conformity with its standard. It is not an unjust criticism that holds that the absence from Christian experience of the confessional note argues a shallow soul. For it is undeniable that, as one enters the classic literature of the spirit alive with the sense of God, one hears at once and forever the deep and unceasing voice of lamentation. The Psalms, the great hymns of the church, Dante's monumental poem, and indeed all the profounder religious utterances of mankind, are shot through with the sense of unspeakable regret and grief. There is such disparity between the vision and the conscious attainment of the inspired spirit that the cry must come: "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!"[1] Here is the consciousness which, when it becomes exclusive, makes all hearty acceptance of Christ as the moral standard for common men absolutely impossible. It is a magnificent consciousness, and it has a permanent place in Christian experience, but it must be qualified by that other consciousness yet more magnificent expressed in the apostolic words, "I can do all things in him that

[1] Isa. vi. 5.

strengtheneth me."[1] But for the mystics, this consciousness, that the morality of God in Christ is the morality for man, would have been lost to the world for more than a thousand years. Under the supremacy of the Augustinian and Calvinistic conception of human nature, the consciousness of sin necessarily tends to become exclusive, and the task of Christian living to become more and more a lamentation over the defect of character and a despair of goodness. More and more salvation must become, not the act by which God educates his children and claims his own, but the triumph of Almighty pity over sheer worthlessness. This overdone sense of depravity, hardened into dogma, stood for centuries against the truth that the morality of God in Christ is the morality for mankind. The truth has at last prevailed, and at this point of belief Christian people everywhere are under an immense debt to the great Unitarian leaders. It is impossible to be too thankful for these words of Dr. Channing: "Expect no good from Jesus any further than you clothe yourselves with excellence. He can impart to you nothing so precious as himself, as his own mind. Look up to the illustrious Son of God with the conviction that you may become one with him in thought, in feeling, in power, in holiness. The most lamentable skepticism on earth, and incomparably the most common, is a

[1] Philippians v. 13.

skepticism as to the greatness, powers, and high destinies of human nature. In this greatness I desire to cherish an unvarying faith. Tell me not of the universal corruption of the race. Humanity has already, in not a few instances, borne conspicuously the likeness of Christ and God. In such men I learn that the soul was made in God's image, and made to conform itself to the loveliness and greatness of his Son."[1] The title of the discourse from which these words are taken — The Imitableness of Christ's Character — might well serve as a summary of the vast service that Unitarianism has rendered to the Christian belief of the century. Channing, and Hedge, and Peabody, and Furness, and their contemporaries, refused to be forever shut up within the consciousness of moral defect and infirmity. They held that the morality of Jesus has power to give life to the spirit to which it comes; that it elicits into clearness and strength the aboriginal human endowment; sets free the divine in man's constitution, and invests it with new vigor and prophetic invincibility. The leaders of the Unitarian movement were men of exalted spirit; in them the ethical and religious principles lived in great power. They were unimpeachable examples of the high doctrine that they proclaimed. Largely through their inspired fidelity to their high teaching, the idea has become

[1] Channing's Works, p. 316.

current again that the example of Christ is the standard for man.

There is no reason why this clear achievement of Christian faith should not remain. It has far less to fear from the avowed enemies of high morality than from a narrow religious zeal. Nothing can obliterate the modern sense of amenableness to the ethics of Christ except a fresh deluge of the old exclusive consciousness of human sinfulness. That which, when normal and present in just proportions, is the sign of a noble spirit, becomes in its exclusive form among men at large the utter wreck of moral hope. The despair of goodness is followed by the abandonment of all effort to reach it. The consciousness of sin, so noble and so mighty when it exists as a secondary consciousness, turns out to be, when it assumes an exaggerated depth, one of the worst plagues of human society. And the door is ever open for the return of this evil in the disparity between the vision and the achievement of the Christian life. We see the Hebrew leader upon Pisgah, surveying in a few moments the land of promise, mastering in vision in less than an hour that which his people required centuries to accomplish. So far does vision outrun attainment. How is the despair which is the almost sure result of this experience to be met? Are we not on the edge of the old bottomless gulf of total depravity? Are we not on the point of

surrendering as a mere dream the great conviction, now so deep and clear, that the morality of Christ is the morality for man?

It must be remembered that character is an achievement in time. One must think of the eternal, ineffable vision in which God lives; one must not forget that even the Creator is compelled to wait for the realization of his purpose. His infinite ineffable vision is his habitation, in that he waits for the song of the morning stars, and the shoutings of the sons of God; in that he waits for the birth of time, the growth of our planet, the appearance of life, the coming of man, the advent of his Son, and the eternal consummation of his kingdom. God is a beholding and a waiting God. The Creative Spirit lives in his perfect vision and waits for its accomplishment. Now the prophetic gift is the power to share God's vision, entertain his design, behold his plan for mankind. And what shall the prophet come to, if he partakes only in the vision of the Eternal? Abraham had his vision of a posterity numerous as the stars in the Syrian sky under which he pitched his tent, and he died with only one son the heir of the vast promise. Moses had his vision of a multitude of slaves wrought over into a mighty nation, conformed in the whole reach of personal, domestic, and civic life to the conscience of Jehovah, and he went up into Pisgah to die, leaving his people in the plain

below little better still than a crowd of slaves. Isaiah beholds Judah regenerated, her kingdom reëstablished in righteousness, and Jehovah administering the empire of the world through her influence, and the inspired statesman was hardly in his grave when Judah was swept into captivity. The apostle beheld a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, and after the labor and sorrow of nearly two thousand years men wait for the realization of the dream. Unless the prophet shall share equally in the vision and the patience of God, he will run the earth wild, he will end in despair. Wherever one finds the share in the vision greater than the participation in the patience of the Divine, there one hears the sorrow of the seer, the wail of the prophet, the passionate, despairing cry of the man of God, "O Lord, how long?" The prophetic office of Christian people must be pressed to this double participation. Men can keep the vision, as the image of the final truth, only as they hold in the heart the waiting spirit.

There is further no insincerity in thinking of the joy of beholding while one waits for the hour of completed achievement. It was a noble thought of Aristotle, although overdone in his hands, that the supreme blessedness of the Infinite consisted in the absoluteness of his vision, and that the sovereign beatitude of human life was to share in the clearest, completest manner, and for the longest

time, the Divine outlook. The apostle on Patmos could do nothing for the immediate relief of the church, but he could behold, and that was much. Dante, driven from the Florence of his love, could accomplish nothing in the way of carrying out the reforms that she so greatly needed; but he had his immortal vision to warn, to purify, and to exalt him. Shakespeare was unable to mend the England of his age. The task was altogether beyond his strength. But he could mirror in the noblest language the vast movement of life that he beheld. He was able to behold the tragic movement, to note the inspirations that informed it, to mark the mysterious power that guided it, to look with awe and pity upon the pathetic and tragic path of its advance, and to anticipate the mighty issues upon which it was sweeping. The active, achieving nature is not the whole man; there is the contemplative, the beholding side. The greatest of all the beatitudes is this: "The pure in heart shall *see* God."[1] Thus, by the assertion of the rights of the contemplative mood, by discovering the springs in the desert of the actual created by beholding the divine, and by sharing in equal proportions both in the vision and the patience of God, believers are able to resist the spirit of despair that inevitably comes when one looks upon what the world should be, and then upon what it is.

[1] Matt. v. 8.

These reflections are part of the reserves of the spirit with which it is able to resist the mood that would deprive the world of what I have termed the great commonplace of Christian teaching to-day, — the amenableness of human society to the moral standard of Jesus Christ. The ideal is not an impossible one. As matter of fact, the conduct and spirit of Christian nations are under its stimulus and rebuke. This surely is gain. There have been times when the morality of Jesus was held to be impossible for ordinary men; and, being regarded as impossible, they naturally felt absolved from all obligation to try to reproduce it in character. These have been times of degeneration and even rottenness in the church. Times of awakening, of the re-birth of moral faith and power, have been invariably attended with confidence in the attainability of a life like Christ's. The first consequence of the career of Jesus was the creation of moral faith, the inauguration of the new era of self-reverence. And although that moral faith and self-reverence have been largely lost to the Christian world for long periods of time, although it is the great merit of the Unitarian movement in New England that it recovered them, one feels how profoundly Athanasius, when but a youth of twenty, touched and laid bare the divine source of this moral rejuvenescence of mankind. "And like as when a great king has entered into some large city, and

taken up his abode in one of the houses there, such a city is at all events held worthy of high honor, nor does any enemy or bandit any longer descend upon it and subject it; but on the contrary it is thought entitled to all care, because of the king's having taken up his residence in a single house there: so, too, has it been with the Monarch of all. For now that he has come to our realm, and taken up his abode in one body among his peers, henceforth the whole conspiracy of the enemy against mankind is checked, and the corruption of death which before was prevailing against them is done away."[1] This is the origin of that moral self-respect and confidence that have had a new birth in the present century. This great revival of the moral faith inspired by the Incarnation is the first distinct and enormous gain in the appreciation of the Person of Christ. There has been lodged in the conscience of this century a sense of the obligation resting upon the disciple to imitate and reproduce the character of his Master. Nothing could be more hopeful for our poor race than the hearty acceptance of this high faith, than the sincere acknowledgment of this obligation. Man then thinks of himself, not as a four-footed beast attempting to fly, but as a wounded eagle wearied with the struggle against fierce storms, and faint because of misfortune,

[1] The Incarnation, Athanasius, ch. ix. 3, 4, translated by A. Robertson.

but sure of himself in the boundless upper deep, able to look at the sun, and confident of finally regaining his lost ascendency.

The second great gain lies in the representative value of Christ Godward. He is the representative son of God; through him we behold our affinity to the Eternal Father, our consubstantiation with Deity. When one thinks how vast an influence the consciousness of his Divine sonship had over the life of Jesus, one begins to appreciate the greatness of this gain in modern Christology. The whole significance of the Baptism of Jesus lies here. It marks the maturity of his consciousness of Divine sonship. Whatever the incidents of the dove and the voice may mean, whatever outward reality there may lie under them, they become finally but symbols of the consciousness of sonship to God that there and then became so absolute in the Lord. The Baptism viewed in this way explains the Temptation. The sense of the filial relation to the Infinite, which at that time matured into absolute conviction, carried Jesus triumphantly through his great trial. Looking into the Temptation itself, it is from first to last an attack upon the consciousness of sonship. If the Tempter can but break down or demoralize that, he must win his fight. And so the whole strength of Jesus is given to the pure assertion of sonship; his task is to keep the sense of that inviolate; and his victory is won

through the absoluteness of the filial consciousness. If one looks at the Transfiguration, the same fact appears. The whole scene has its significance as a fresh and overwhelming expression of the sense of the filial tie that bound Jesus to God. That sense had come to maturity at his Baptism, and as a preparation for his Temptation. Although it has been renewed from day to day by communion with his Father, it has been worn by the labor and sorrow of his ministry, and it needs to come to a second sublimer maturity that Christ may come to his cross with victorious power. Wherever one looks in the life of Jesus, one finds that the source of his sinlessness and perfect humanity is his absolute sense of divine sonship. His morality is the morality of the Son of the Highest; his character has its creative centre in this great conviction; his example carries us back to this spring rising in his heart where that rests upon the heart of God.

Now, if the morality of Christ is a creation out of his conscious sonship to the Eternal, if the ideal that he holds before mankind has its source here, if his example is unmeaning until one looks at the filial soul behind it, one sees at once that only as conscious sonship to God is elicited in every man can he become a hopeful or even intelligent candidate for the Christian life. The consciousness of the indestructible filial relation to the Infinite is the condition without which an

appreciation of Christian morality is not even possible. If, then, the morality of Christ is to be made available for the world, the consciousness of sonship to God in which Christ lived, and out of which his absolute moral example came, must be made universal. Maurice has pronounced the First Epistle of John to be the best text-book ever written on Christian morality; and one finds the dominant note of that wonderful composition to be "now are we sons of God." In that letter the Incarnation is presented as the Eternal Life in the life of Jesus, and the morality of God in Christ is pressed upon mankind because "now are we sons of God." I repeat, therefore, that the example of Christ has moral significance for man solely because man is the child of God.

According to habits of thought but recently broken up, God had only one son. Our race, while in an unfilial mood, was not composed of the children of the Highest. By nature men belong to the animal kingdom; to the kingdom of the spirit they belong only by the miracle of regeneration and the condescension of the Divine adoption. This opinion is no longer preachable or credible among thinking men. It is obviously inconsistent with Christian theism and Christian ethics. If it still lives in the schools, it is utterly dead in the great fields of militant Christendom. It is the mother of fatalism and despair. It postpones all Christian ethical appeal until regenera-

tion has taken place, that is, until the animal has been made over into a man and a child of God; and, as that new creation is the work of the Eternal Spirit, Christian morality has no sphere of operation except in the extremely limited community of believers in their own regeneration. The materialism and fatalism underlying the notion of the complete animalism of man, prior to the miracle of the new birth, are part of an obsolete philosophy that for a long time did duty with an equally obsolete theology. One may well rejoice over the gain that has come in the recognition of Christ as the elder brother, humanity's mighty representative, the revealer of the tie that forever binds every man to the heart of God. It was an overdone and suicidal doctrine of depravity that obscured and ultimately buried out of sight this original and imperishable revelation of the gospel. That there is the least difficulty with this view in reading the New Testament cannot for one moment be admitted. The texts that speak of our adoption into the family of God are explicable upon the simple principle that men, although naturally in the relation of sons, are not living in accordance with it. They are prodigal sons, but still sons. Paul must be studied in the light of his Master's great parable; the apostle's meaning must be construed with reference to the central truth of the Incarnation; his epistles must be enriched, and, if need be,

revised by the gospel. Here, let it be repeated, are the two inestimable gains of the church of to-day in the intellectual appreciation of Christ. First, he is consubstantiated with humanity; and, second, by means of the revelation in him, humanity is seen to be consubstantiated with God.

IV.

Another great gain, of a widely different character, in our thought of Christ, must now be noticed. It is now becoming clear that the final meaning of nature and the character of ultimate reality are given through Christ. We live in the universe that he has made; our judgments of truth and of goodness are but the images of his mind and heart; our whole thought of the Infinite mystery in whose presence we stand has been formed under his influence. Man's view of nature is necessarily anthropomorphic; since the advent of Jesus it has been, among all positive as opposed to negative thinkers, Christomorphic. The full significance of this marvelous supremacy is not as widely seen as it should be. It is one of the most impressive of the testimonies to the ascendency of Christ over our Western world.

From the beginning, men have struggled to know the nature of the world beyond them. For a long time they did not see that, when they construed it as matter, they were using their own

bodies as interpreter: when they recognized it as life, they were looking at it as a mightier exhibition of the life of which they were conscious; when they regarded it as force, they were but reducing it to the form of the human will. Now this conclusion of all sound thinking has behind it a profoundly interesting pre-Christian history. More than four centuries before the beginning of our era, a famous Greek thinker cleared away a whole world of clouds from the approach to nature. He said, "Man is the measure of all things;" it was the distinct assertion that all speculation must be in the forms of human thought, that man must take himself as the standard of judgment in all questions of the true, and the beautiful, and the good. Like all first thoughts, it was conceived in a crude way; like every unqualified insight, it was liable to great abuse. If man is the measure of all things, it was concluded that whatever he thinks must be true, whatever he fancies must be beautiful, whatever he likes must be good. And the descent is swiftly made from the universal to the particular, from the grand general term "man" to the special, living individual. If man is the measure of all things, then whatever any person thinks, and fancies, and likes must for him be the true, and the beautiful, and the good. But then there may be as many thoughts, and fancies, and likes as there are human beings; these may all stand in

a bewildering contradiction; and therefore it follows that there is no truth, or beauty, or goodness apart from the feeling of the individual. A truth for all men, a beauty for all, a goodness for all, there is not and cannot be. Thus the magnificent insight of Protagoras seems to plunge the race into the most helpless subjectivity, into absolute skepticism. And yet the thought is forever true that man is the measure of all things.

Against this famous maxim, and the utter denial of the reality of a universal truth and goodness, Plato protested with all the might of his exalted genius. He held that God and man are at heart kindred; that man is made in the image of the Divine; that his mind is thus in the form of the Infinite mind. But God's thought and not man's is the absolute thought, God's nature and not man's gives the eternal beauty, God's choice and not man's reveals the immutable good. "Our God is, then, the measure of all things;"[1] and the task of the philosopher is to climb up into the Divine outlook, and somehow obtain access to the vision, the love, and the determination of the Infinite. And this he is able to do, because of his participation in the Divine nature, — because, as we should say, his mind is theomorphic. It is the essential prerogative of philosophic genius, according to Plato, to ascend from the mere human outlook, and mea-

[1] The Laws, p. 716.

sure truth, beauty, and goodness by the thought, and love, and life of the Eternal.[1]

Plato's protest is magnificent, and this high faith in the self-transcendence of human reason has held sway over the deepest and noblest minds in all these subsequent centuries. Yet something still remained to be done, in the way of acute and conclusive thinking, before the abuse of the maxim, that man is the measure of all things, became, among all those who understand the problem, a philosophic impossibility. This piece of valid and final thinking was done by Aristotle, who admitted at once that man is the measure of all things. He saw clearly that it is impossible for man to think except in terms of his own thought, — that all human speculations about the universe must be anthropomorphic. But, granting that man is the measure of all things, the decisive question remains to be settled, What man? The lunatic, the vicious, the slave of an unworthy ambition? Are these our measuring-rods? Or must we not look for the σπουδαῖος ἀνήρ, the perfect man, as the standard of all truth, and all beauty, and all life?[2] Here is the high faith of Plato brought under definite form, drawn to a concrete human issue. God's thought is still the absolute truth; man's mind, through its kinship with the Divine, is still able to reproduce

[1] The Phædrus, pp. 244–257.

[2] Ethics, Book III. ch. iv. 4, 5.

something of the vision of the Infinite; and the perfect man is the prophet of the Highest, the standard intellect and heart and will for mankind.

But the next question is one that philosophy cannot answer; for it is a question of fact, — Where is the perfect man? The philosopher may triumphantly declare that, when he shall come, he will show us all things. But at the date of the philosophic victory he had not arrived. The histories of the Old World, Egyptian, Hebrew, Greek, and Roman, might be searched, and the search would be vain; for no perfect man can be found in any or all of these civilizations. And it is in the light of reflections like these that one learns what the great philosophic apostle meant when, in the midst of conflicting minds, he declares, "But we have the mind of Christ."[1]

Here is the vindication at once of the insight

[1] 1 Corinthians ii. 16. This vast and profound chapter of ancient thought, without whose mastery one cannot so much as find one's way in modern speculation, may be set forth in the four quotations following:

πάντων χρημάτων μέτρον ἄνθροπον εἶναι. Man is the measure of all things. (Protagoras.)

ὁ δὴ θεὸς ἡμῖν πάντων χρημάτων μέτρον ἂν εἴη μάλιστα. Our God would prove to be supremely the measure of all things. (Plato.)

ὁ σπουδαῖος γὰρ ἕκαστα κρίνει ὀρθῶς. The perfect man is the perfect judge of all things. (Aristotle.)

ἡμεῖς δὲ νοῦν χριστοῦ ἔχομεν. But we have the mind of Christ. (Paul.)

of Protagoras and the philosophic faith of Plato; here, too, is the realization in fact of the great thought of Aristotle. Man is the measure of all things; he becomes a noble measure because he is able to reproduce the Divine vision; he is the standard of reality when he becomes perfect; and the Christ is the perfect man, and therefore the revelation of the absolute truth and goodness.

This is the noble chapter of ancient thought and historic revelation, stated in the terms of a free interpretation. We take up the problem where the old thinkers left it. The first step in all clear thinking about nature is to recognize that all science is necessarily in the forms of human thought. As a recent writer puts it, "The proposal to avoid anthropomorphism is as absurd as the suggestion that we should take an unbiased outside view of ourselves by jumping out of our skins."[1] Nature understood is nature put into the forms of the human mind. If we are to construe the outward world at all, we must do it through the forms of our rational life. The necessity is laid upon us to interpret the universe in terms of reason. Mind and will are behind everything, are under everything; so we must say if we are to say anything. But just at this point the question comes, What sort of mind is behind the outward world; what kind of intelli-

[1] Riddles of the Sphinx, p. 145.

gence is behind nature; what is the character of the will that is under all things? These are the deepest of all questions. And, by all believers in God in our Western world, Christ's intelligence and will have been selected as representing the Supreme Intelligence and Will. It is in reality the reason and heart of Christ that we believe to lie behind all things, that we trust as the core of the universe. This is a stupendous step to take, but it is a step that all believers in the Christian God have taken. Ever since Christ came, religious thinkers have been anxious to show that his mind and heart were identical with the creative mind and heart; they have turned the anthropomorphic view of the universe into the Christomorphic view. Much of our best modern poetry has had before it the same high calling. Wordsworth, Shelley, Emerson, Tennyson, and Browning all glorify nature, all profess to live upon its beauty, all behold in it one vast form of the Eternal Christ.

At this point modern science comes upon the scene and speaks with two voices. The first voice is godless. It tells of nothing but the struggle for existence; it declares that heartless self-seeking is the absolute law of the entire animal world below man; that the race is always to the swift and the battle to the strong; and that, without brutal indifference to others, large and long-continued success for any race of creatures is impos-

sible. Nature, according to this view, is but another name for the selfish, ruthless, and godless march of power. There may be intelligence and will behind the cosmic tragedy; but on a stage swarming with self-seekers, one set annihilating another, and each generation finally wiped out by the merciless laws of animal life, there is absolutely no hint of love. This is the horrible caricature of nature that one finds in much of the first-class scientific literature of our century.

But the second voice of science is beginning to control our thoughts. The profounder Christian thinkers and the great modern poets were not all wrong. There is something divine in nature. If in that realm there is a tremendous egoism, there is also a predominating altruism; if in that sphere there is an incessant struggle for life, there is beside it, and controlling it, the struggle for the life of others. Without this unselfishness that selfishness would defeat itself, and the lower animal life of the world would perish in a generation. To make possible the continuous wrestle for life, we must have in nature a parallel devotion to the life of others, an increasing disregard for self, an unceasing solicitude for offspring. Throughout the animal world we find the amazing facts of fatherhood and motherhood, and these convert the lion's den and the tiger's jungle into centres of self-sacrifice. Throughout the empire of living creatures, one beholds the parent cher-

ishing, feeding, and fitting the offspring for the battle of life; everywhere one sees a large part of the animal kingdom existing mainly for the rest. This vast, incessant, and beautiful struggle for the life of others, as Professor Drummond felicitously terms it, requires interpretation.[1] What does this living and dying for others mean? Is it not a hint, a foretoken, a dim anticipation of Him who gave his life for humanity? Is it not the shadow of his cross lying upon the whole domain of creature existence? Is not the universal and noble passion of parental love the cord by which even the brute world is bound to the heart of God? Thus at last, by the hand of science, we behold the struggle for the life of others, that was the supreme note in the career of Christ, carried back through the entire kingdom of brute life, traced out beyond space and time, and followed up to its seat in the eternal love of God for his universe. Nature still remains dark enough; the contention is not that the gloom is abolished, but that it is relieved. The devouring egoism remains part of the life of the animal world. We can see how essential that self-assertiveness is to the issues of life. Those who make it the sole essential law of all improving existence should not forget the improvement in which it issues, when they come to sit in ethical judgment upon the law. Granted that the necessity

[1] The Ascent of Man, Introduction ii.

for the ferocious egoism in animal existence is an absolute mystery, the fact that it is a vanishing force, and that from the first it is clearly under the ascendency of another force, the altruistic impulse of parenthood pours a flood of light through the whole wild process of nature. An egoism that is vanishing, that from the first has been under the direction of altruism, that, as life has risen in value, has fallen into a subordination more and more marked, and that, in the thought of mankind as the final cause of evolution, sinks into the temporary servant and forerunner of an ultimate victorious love, may remain as a distress, but not as unmitigated or lasting.

The egoism in nature that appears so opposed to a lofty interpretation of its purpose is but the counterpart of what we find in human history under the name of sin. The employment of an excessive individualism in nature, and the permission of irrational selfishness and an evil will in humanity, are facts for which the Almighty has, without doubt, the highest reason, but thus far there has been no revelation of it. But if in nature and in humanity the tremendous individualism, the devouring passion, has from the first been under the control of an opposing principle, the force of self-sacrifice; and if, further, the vast form of egoism both in the animal world and in the human is suffering reduction, with the great prophecy forever uttering itself of the far-off

goal toward which the whole movement is directed, when altruism shall be all in all, — then the universe, under both its aspects, is no longer incompatible with absolute goodness. Both nature and history may be brought to the highest in humanity for interpretation. History has for eighteen centuries been made to yield its meaning in this way, and at length nature comes to the same test.

Now this interpretation of the higher and final significance of nature through Christ is but the fresh assertion that we cannot go beyond him. Our human universe is a Christian universe. The best in nature, the best in human history, the best in the hope of the world, is but the image of Christ. Thus, so far as we have a God, Christ is in very truth our God. We baptize the Creative Being behind nature and behind human history and life into the name of Christ. We do all that we do, when we do our best, in the power of Christ. A nature with the hint of Christ in it, a humanity capable of putting on the form of his love, a universe gathering itself up into Christ as its head, — that is our best thinking. It may be true or it may be false, but it is what we all do when we do our best. We have heard recently of certain persons who pretend to have the power of leaving and returning to their bodies at will, — of certain disembodied spirits sitting on the mantelpiece and taking an

outside view of themselves. That is the superlative of hallucination. Men are not permitted to jump out of their skin, unless they jump for good; they are not allowed to take a position beyond themselves in order to get an outside view. A mirror, or the mind of an honest friend, is the nearest they can get to that feat. And in the same way, those who think they can transcend Christ, and look at this universe as if he had never lived, are fooling themselves with the vainest imaginations. A view of this universe, even an atheistic one, unmodified by Christ, is not possible; and for proof I may cite the ethics and the mysticism of Positivism. Much less is a religious view of the universe possible uncontrolled by our Lord. He is the Alpha and Omega of all our high thinking, the beginning and the end. Our universe, at first anthropomorphic, is now Christomorphic. Our civilization is the product of Christ. Through the struggle in it for the life of others, nature is coming within the compass of the cross. The universe, regarded from of old as the work of thought, is now held to be the work of Christian thought. To affirm that our universe is anthropomorphic is to assert that God is a human God; to discover that it is Christomorphic is to declare that God is a Christian God. This is the transformation that the Founder of Christianity has wrought in the form of human thinking. The best thing that men

can say is, we have the mind of Christ; for the intellect, no less than the conscience, he is a finality. His encompassing presence, and the fact that he conditions the whole working philosophy of the higher mind of mankind, that he dominates the spirit, and supplies the form for our ultimate thought of all things, prepare the reason for the measureless significance of his Person. These reflections do not prove that he is at the heart of the universe, but they do prove that he is at the heart of our human universe; they do not demonstrate the reality of his absolute ascendency, but they do demonstrate his ascendency over mankind.

V.

Three great advances have thus been made in the intellectual appreciation of the Person of Christ. He is the acknowledged representative of humanity, the accepted revelation of the essential kinship of the divine and the human, and the guide to the ultimate meaning of nature. The morality of the Highest is the morality for man; it is so because man is the son of the Highest; and nature has its origin in the primal love that never fails to guide the whole cosmic process, that shines in the altruism that burns brighter and brighter against the vanishing ferocity of brute existence, and that controls human history in the cross of the Master. Beyond this, how-

ever, in the thought of to-day, all is dark. That there is in Christ any essential otherness from mankind, any relationship to the Deity that sets him apart from mankind, any attribute in virtue of which he is the Eternal Son of God, it is difficult for many minds in our time to believe. We accept from him a doctrine of morality, a conception of humanity, and a faith in nature; but we are still unable to see the richness and essentialness of his idea of God. Unless we obtain from Christ, in addition to a clue to the meaning of nature, an immutable morality, and a conception of the divineness of man, a doctrine of God, we cannot be said to have mastered the secret of his character. His idea of an eternal Fatherhood in the Infinite is the heart of the matter. If we can retain that as the deepest reality in the universe, we have our guide to the interpretation of the remaining mystery in the life of Jesus.

The fundamental defect in current thought about Christ is an overdone principle of identity. To-day, otherness in Christ to humanity counts for nothing. This is indeed a curious intellectual mood. It is a pushing of the law of identity to the extremest lengths; it is a ruling-out of the law of difference in the most radical fashion. Now, all knowledge rests upon these two great laws of kinship and contrast; and if there be, as there most certainly is, a plurality of beings in the universe, that plurality must embody the two

fundamental principles of identity and difference. Between the object of sense — the flower, the tree, or the hill — and the mind that apprehends it there must be kinship; otherwise the two could not come together: but it is equally clear that between them there must be contrast; otherwise there could be no subject and object, that is, no knowledge. Among human beings there must be a vast attribute in common, as this is essential to the fact of brotherhood; but there must be among them special endowment, in the strictest sense, private property, as on any other ground individuality or personality would be a myth. Through all the ranks of life there must run a sublime identity. There is a sense even now in which God must be all in all. A qualified but magnificent pantheism is involved in the very notion of a universe. All things are bound by common affinities to one centre; in Him all things consist, and all men have their being. Historical pantheism, the typical fascinating pantheism of Spinoza, is in error only through its exclusiveness. The conception of one universal substance is true as far as it goes, but it is not the whole truth. The strand of difference runs throughout creation. As without the identity there can be no unity, so without the difference there can be no variety and no reality in finite existences. If nature is an order, it is an order of particular forces; if human history is a unity,

there is multiplicity in the unity. As in the crowding figures of the saints on some great cathedral window there must be the art that makes face answer to face in a common rapture and aspiration, and the skill that individualizes and builds its dreams into distinct and sacredly significant personalities, so everywhere throughout the empire of life the two great principles of kinship and contrast must run. All the figures upon the blazing glass wear in their faces the marks of the Lord, but the faces themselves are entirely distinct. We are thus led to the conclusion that upon these two great laws of identity and difference all knowledge and all being finally rest; and the highest expression in humanity of the law of difference is the Person of Jesus Christ.

Against this affirmation the mood to which I have referred looks very strange. It appears extreme in its onesidedness. If there is complete identity between Christ and humanity in respect of being and range of powers, men are ready to believe on him; but if it is said that there is any otherness, any eternal difference between him and his brethren, it is felt that that must be a metaphysical fiction. Christ gives the possible stature of every man, and that we readily accept; he reveals the point at which every human life touches the Eternal Fatherhood, and that we willingly believe. But that Jesus should sustain

to God a relation singular, inapproachable, ineffable, is to-day either denied outright or admitted blindly.

Now it should be clearly understood that the denial of the possible supreme divinity of Jesus means the absolute destruction of all individuality. If identity is the sole canon of reality, then whatever departures there may be from that law in the present constitution of the material universe and human life are non-essential for being, and therefore of no importance for thought. If a particular man is completely understood through the concept man; if we have nothing more to say of an Aristotle, a Shakespeare, a Cromwell, or a Beethoven than that he is comprehended under the general notion of mankind; if in our sense of truth we are dominated solely by the principle of kinship, — we destroy the beautiful individualism of nature, we take no account of human genius, we reduce the living world to a dead monotony, and sink all particular persons in the gulf of an absolute pantheism. The denial of the possible supreme divinity of Jesus means nothing less than this. For it proceeds upon the supposition that the attributes that men have in common are the sole, exclusive reality, and that the attributes in which they differ are not attributes at all, but the mere accidents of existence. If difference is an illusion, there is but one being in the universe, and the present phe-

nomenal world is but one in the infinite series of self-exhibitions that that being is giving of himself. The differences of distinct minds and consciences and characters; the contrasts between the intellects that behold the truth and those that wander in error, between the consciousness that is self-approving and the consciousness that is self-condemning, — all the antitheses found in the varying range of endowment, in the use of power, and in the solid fact of an irreducible individualism, must be regarded as a vain show. If the individuality of Jesus is of no account, if his separateness from sinners means nothing, if his genius carries one nowhere, if he is real and significant only so far as he participates in a common nature, then indeed it follows that his supreme divinity is a myth; but it turns out also that human personality is a myth, that all claim to reality on the part of the thinking, feeling, and active soul is insane raving. We have put the Master to a new and a final death, but in doing this we have slain humanity. The pious reflection that we go and die with him is superfluous, for by the terms of the reasoning we are already dead. This is the price that must be paid by those who would disprove the singular divinity of Jesus. They must imitate the final act of Samson, only they must greatly extend the scope of it. They must gather into the house filled with the hostile conception, crowded with

the haughty historic Philistinism, our entire humanity; and when the pillars whereon that structure stands are shaken, when that temple of truth and peace is pulled to the ground, the only being left to mourn our dead race, and to give it burial in eternal oblivion, will be the solitary God whose solitary show the tragedy is, and whose desolateness one would pity if one could recover distinct existence long enough to exercise commiseration.

But if we are not ready to aid and abet this universal suicide on the part of mankind; if we are not quite prepared to empty nature of its wonderful variety, and human life of its endless differences; if we still hold that fact must be the guide of thought, and God's order the stable foundation of all philosophy; if we continue to assert the reality and worth of finite beings, — we may at least affirm that the unique divinity of Jesus is possible. This may be the meaning of his individuality, the significance of his transcendence, the root of that mind and character that are absolute for mankind. In holding to the presence in the living universe of the great law of contrast, we keep open the foundation for the great historic faith.

The current moods toward the supreme divinity of Jesus I have characterized as those of denial and of blindness. What shall be done with the negation, and how shall sight be recovered to the blind? Shall one quietly accept the limitations of

our generation, and attempt to run one's thought of Christ on the single rail of its far-reaching half truth? Shall one affirm only so far as one may anticipate a favorable response, telling the souls who wish to go farther, who long for the effulgence of the Eternal glory and the impress of his substance in human form to become their Lord, that nothing remains for them but unwinnowed tradition and blind faith? Or shall one take a position just the opposite of that? Shall one boldly contend that the historic faith concerning the Person of Christ as the Eternal Son of God rests upon the higher reason of mankind, and that, although the light is too dazzling to admit of utter penetration, one can behold the various highways of rational inquiry converging upon and terminating in the inaccessible splendor? This seems to me the sound position. Rationalism of the right sort is the very life of theology, — the rationalism that does not create a universe, but that seeks to know the one already here; that does not wish to simplify forces and persons out of existence; that is here as a learner and thinker, and not in the rôle of a creator; that keeps its vision upon the divine fact; that waits at its problem with the patience inspired by the consciousness of the endless life, and by the sense that its problem is the problem of humanity. The faith in the Trinity rests upon reason at work upon historic fact. The doctrine was a construction

of the mind of the early Christian centuries, the product of metaphysical genius unequaled in the history of the church; and if to-day the great conception is coming up for re-discussion and further development, it is because that conception is fundamental not only to the Christian faith, but also to the humanity that believes in itself as made in the image of God. Whatever else the idea of the Trinity implies, it certainly means that being and knowledge and love, existence and intelligence and character, are realities in God; and that the various fundamental forms of society in the earth, the essential relationships of humanity, have their Archetype, their Eternal Pattern and Causal Source, in the nature of the Infinite. Our business now, however, is not with this high theme, but with various lines of suggestion in support of the grand historic tradition concerning Christ. Still, as the significance of the difference in Jesus to mankind depends upon the difference that one may discover in God, a section of this discussion must be given to that vast subject.

VI.

Faith exults in our time over the kinship which it beholds between God and man, and well it may. An essential community of being between divinity and humanity is the great postulate of a reasonable religion. All knowledge of God, all profound trust, and all intelligent worship must

depend upon the assumption that men are the children of the Infinite. Because men feel that they are within the community of the Divine Life, they are sure that the knowledge of God is possible; also absolute trust in his character, and the exultant worship of his perfection. Out of this feeling of kinship with the Eternal is at length elaborated the great belief in his Personality: from this fundamental life of the religious spirit the thought at last takes distinct shape that God must answer to man; that he must be self-conscious and self-determining; that his nature must be aware of itself, and must be its own guide. This truth, that at heart the divine and the human are one, has taken tremendous hold of this century. Believers feel that the very existence of religion, and the whole rational appeal of Christianity, depend upon this radical affinity between the finite spirit and the Infinite. They go farther. They contend that without this assumption there can be no knowledge of the real world, no science and no philosophy. The life of science and philosophy and faith is sustained by the conviction that men are in the presence of a real universe; that at heart it is akin to themselves, and may therefore be known and served and trusted. There is reason nowhere unless there is reason everywhere.

This great truth, upon which depend all the higher interests of mankind, must be held at

whatever cost; but there must be added to it that of the infinite contrast between the human mind and the Mind that rules the universe. The two conceptions are complementary; taken singly, each is but a suicidal half truth. The principle of identity, carried through the universe as its sole law, sinks everything in the abysses of an absolute pantheism; the principle of differences pushed to extremes gives us an atomic world where knowledge and morality are impossible, and where even life must be unconscious and blind. It would be the easiest thing in the world to show the danger of admitting into our conception of God a fundamental law of contrast. Use this idea by itself, and we shall have the metaphysics of materialism, the ethics of pure individualism, and the religion of despair; use it exclusively, and we shall have a God utterly transcendent, between whom and humanity there must remain a great gulf fixed. It may seem to many a most fatal admission for a writer to make. Does it not follow that the more of contrast to man that one believes to exist in God, the farther must He recede from human interest and hope? This must follow if He is not at one and the same time the immanent and transcendent, the infinitely near and the infinitely far; it will be inevitable if we fail to qualify the idea of contrast with the equally essential idea of kinship.

One may, however, take for granted that, in

the reigning religious thought of the present, the principle of identity is not in danger of being underestimated. It is the other half of the truth before which men hesitate and deny. It is generally supposed by a large body of influential writers that the very idea of a universe excludes all radical contrast from the nature of things, and that the existence of a reasonable religion like Christianity carries with it the complete identity of the divine and the human. How little basis there is for this sweeping and perilous generalization, I now propose to show by a rapid consideration of that which is fundamental in the faith of all Christians, the personality of God. Without attempting the definition of personality in the case either of man or his Maker, there are certain attributes of personality, universally recognized as such among those who believe in it, which will be our guide in the examination.

Man is aware of his own life; he is a self-conscious being. God is aware of his life; he is a self-conscious Being. Here the finite and the Infinite are at one. But man's consciousness is limited and exclusive: he knows himself and the world and God truly, but only in part; he collects in himself no more than the merest aspects of the great triple reality of the soul and nature and their Creator. Not only is his consciousness limited; it is also exclusive. The final secret of thing-hood and creature-hood, and the life of his

brethren, is hidden from him, and the core of his existence is concealed from them. Man's consciousness is like an inland sea; the sea is largely exclusive, shut in from the full power of ocean movements, and with access embarrassed to the tides from without. It is also limited; it touches the earth beneath and the shores around it, and it looks up into the heaven above it. It is in communion with all things beneath and about and above it, and yet the communion is not open; it is rigidly and eternally confined. Here is the image of the consciousness of man, unable to reveal its own secret, and unable to compass the secret of other hearts. Man touches the brute worlds beneath him, he stands in fellowship with the human worlds around him, he looks up into the divine worlds above him. He is in a real, indisputable communion with all things; yet the distinctive note of his consciousness is its limitation and exclusiveness. Now, if one believes at all in the Divine consciousness, one sees instantly how infinitely different it must be at this point. All things are in God, and yet are not to be confounded with God. All things, all creatures, and in a true sense all persons, must be modes of his boundless and inclusive consciousness. God's omniscience implies access to the heart of everything, — implies that all finite existences are transparent to his thought, that they are all and utterly within the compass of his mind. One

cannot shut the atmosphere from one's home; it comes in through walls of every thickness. It goes down through land and sea, it passes through the heart of the earth, and, like an omnipresent intelligence, encompasses and searches the whole globe. Thus the Divine consciousness includes all things, and sees through all things. I repeat that all things, all creatures, and all persons are, in a true sense, modes of the one Infinite consciousness. And here one may feel the entire credibility of the Trinity, if historically revealed. The consciousness of God carries in it a radical and an eternal contrast to that of man. It has millions and millions of modes, which are yet more than modes, which are persons. They are part of it, and yet are distinct from it. Why should there not be three Eternal Distinctions behind all these multitudinous temporal distinctions? In the nature of the case, what reason is there against the reality of an eternal threefold form in the Godhead, — the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Life and the Light and the Love that have been one from everlasting? One cannot judge wholly of the psychology of God from the psychology of man. History, as the process of the self-revelation of the Infinite, must be brought into court. If that shall give its authority for the Trinitarian conception of the Deity, there can be no rational objection to it from the consciousness that is finite. Contrast

there must be between the intelligence that is limited and exclusive and the Intelligence that is boundless and inclusive. That contrast may include the socialism in the Deity which is the ground of humanity in the earth.

Another great attribute of personality is unity of mental life. Men commonly think of personality through this function of it. It means a force and a result, a builder and a fair structure of knowledge. It signifies that impressions of the outward world, all memories and imaginations, all insights and thoughts, are compacted, organized into one whole. Oftener than anything else, even in the thought of exhaustive thinkers, personality means the presence and the work in knowledge of the unifying spirit. But in man this unity is only potential; it is never actual. Our sense-impressions are never all collected; they are constantly falling from the overcrowded mind, as the fine sand escapes from the overcrowded hand. They wait at the doors of the five senses in endless lines, and, fast as one may think, swift as may be the mental admission given to sensations, one is never able perceptibly to diminish the length of the line. The Infinite waits upon the senses for a mental ticket-of-leave to enter, and it must wait forever. The number of sensations uncollected, unorganized, unnoticed, lost, is simply countless. Even in the sphere of sense, man moves among worlds unrealized, and

the unity of his mental life on its sensuous side is but an ideal. When one passes within the smaller compass of memory, one finds the same thing. Here, likewise, the mental life is too vast to be completely marshaled. Round the memories that one can recall, circling the definite intellectual life that one can reproduce, is the horizon where, in vast clouds, fearful and beautiful, rest immense masses of past experience. They are lying there in lurid or splendid haze, terrible as a thunder-cloud, gorgeous as an autumnal sunset, part of one's being, yet too far off to be commanded, too vast to be comprehended. The same line of remark holds equally true of one's imaginations. In the common mind, they are like the veering uncertain wind; in the intellect of genius, they are like a dance of stars. What unity they have is a mystery, and the idea of putting the total under mental review is a vain dream. And so of our flashes of insight and of our elaborated thoughts. One can never bring them all together, or work them into a complete living, self-conscious whole. Men are perpetually escaping and going beyond themselves; they run out, in the uncomprehended fullness of life, into the Infinite. The mental life of the best-trained man is like a piece of cloth splendidly woven at the centre, but loose on both sides and at both ends. At the centre the spirit weaves the beautiful fabric of thought, knits it well, and holds it fast; but the

sides and the ends are always raveled. The personality of man, or that aspect of it which means the unity of his whole psychic life, is but a prophecy. In God, the unity which we look for in vain in the human soul is alone found. God's total history, his total thought, must be self-comprehending. He is infinite and at the same time absolutely self-containing The greatness of this contrast is evident enough. The value of it for a complete doctrine of God is not now the consideration that I would press. I wish to emphasize the fact that in the very centre of the identity between God and man, in the wondrous unity implied in intellectual life, the difference is infinite. It is the difference between prophecy and the realization, the imperfect and the perfect.

This difference between the personality of God and of man is even more impressive when one considers it under its moral aspect. For, after all, moral unity is the heart of personality. And here surely personality is hardly to be found among men. They are a kingdom in a state of civil war, a continent that is the theatre of hosts of contending armies. The counter-movements of desire, the terrible rush and roar where the opposing seas of passion meet, the battle among one's thoughts of truth, the conflict among one's divinations of right, and the yet more fatal dualism between what one is and what one knows one should be, reduce moral personality to a faith

and a daring hope. Where in this wild life is actual moral personality? Where is the complete organization of thought and purpose and passion and endeavor that one must have in a perfect personality? Both in its intellectual and moral meaning, and as standing for the unity and self-consistency of life, personality is in man only potential. He has the sublime capacity for it, and his task is the realization of the capacity. Man's world is still in process of building, and the confusion is great; and, when from this confusion in the human soul one lifts one's vision to the moral order of the Divine Life, one is overwhelmed as in the presence of an eternal contrast. There one sees the absolute truth, the absolute right, and the absolute love; the thought is all true, the conscience forever clear and final, the love eternally pure. The mental and moral movement is self-consistent, self-comprehending, entire and eternal. The personality of God is the only complete personality in the universe, and here again one beholds the contrast between the human and the Divine. As Lotze says in his profound discussion, "perfect personality is in God only: to all finite minds there is allotted but a pale copy thereof; the finiteness of the finite is not a producing condition of this personality, but a limit and a hindrance of its development."[1]

Activity is another attribute of personality,

[1] Microcosmus, Book IX. ch. iv. p. 688.

and it clearly belongs both to man and his Maker; but once more, in the heart of another identity, we come upon a fundamental difference. Man is a local being, provincial by his very nature. He can act only through a moment of time and at a point in space. Make the sphere of his self-revealing activity as large as one may, still he remains chained to particular times and places. One realizes impressively one's weakness and localism when one is at sea. There is the heaving and unmeasured deep beneath him, and sweeping away on every side. Our Creator has sent us on a mightier voyage, has put us under the sublimest appeal to imagination in the very situation of human life. Our planet carries man in its vast circuit about the sun, bears him onward in an endless voyage, sweeps on through whole seasons of tumult in the aerial deep, drives forward through the glory of daybreak and the splendors of sundown, gives an outlook to right and left and overhead into the shining abysses of infinite space, and, through every variety of impressive experience in its magnificent flight, subjects him to the feeling of his weakness and provincialism. He is the child of God, but he is chained to particular times and seasons. But the movements of the worlds of life beneath man, the vast current of human history, the courses of the stars, the simultaneous and universal march of nature and spirit, is but the expression of the omnipresent

Will. In the philosophy of faith one must not forget the localism of man and the universalism of God.

We have thus traced a few of the phases of that infinite difference which the Eternal must ever present to mankind. We have found these within the holy circles of community, in the august centre of personality itself. Personality implies both in God and in man self-consciousness, mental and moral unity, and self-determination, that is, a being in the revelation of its power; but in consciousness, in integrity, and in activity we have beheld infinite contrasts. Man is not the measure of God; God is the eternal standard and goal for man, and, while he strengthens himself in his kinship to his Creator, he must not forget that the whole significance and task of his existence are developed in the presence of the infinite contrast between the perfect and the imperfect.[1]

VII.

The supreme divinity of Jesus Christ is but the sovereign expression in human history of the great law of difference in identity that runs

[1] "For we must of necessity hold that there is something exceptional and worthy of God which does not admit of any comparison at all, not merely in things, but which cannot even be conceived by thought or discovered by perception, so that a human mind should be able to apprehend how the unbegotten God is made the Father of the only begotten Son." Origen, De Principiis, Book I. chap. ii. 4.

through the entire universe, and that has its home in the heart of the Godhead. With this law in our thought, we dare to look into the New Testament conception of God as the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. In Him we find eternally existing the Paternal, the Filial, and the Union of these two. Here are the differences in the ineffable community of the Godhead. Is it not conceivable that the Filial in God should have been in union with Jesus in a way unparalleled and inapproachable? Surely it is thinkable and credible that, in consequence of his mission and relation to the world, the Deity might have been the basis of Christ's being in a manner utterly singular, and that, along with the kinship between him and us, there might be an eternal contrast. The universe is the work of God. It is not for us to say what shall be the character of creation; we must take reality as we find it, and reverently seek for insight into its mystic depths. The claim, that in Jesus there is a union with God absolutely unique, is at least conceivably sound and true. The claim cannot be disposed of without consideration, it cannot be dismissed prior to examination of the fact. Jesus Christ is a fact too transcendent to be accommodated to the requirements of a given philosophy. The scheme that is to prevail, that is not doomed to a disastrous collision with reality, must grow out of the historic truth. The man who comes forward

with a programme in his hand, according to which the universe must be ordered, is too ambitious. His task is too great for him. He is usurping the place of creative wisdom. The universe is already here, ordered in terms of the Eternal Reason; and history is already here, and its evolution of the character of the Ultimate Life, and man's duty is to follow the path of the great revelation. The assertion that Christ cannot be very God of very God, in a sense infinitely beyond what may be truthfully said of all other human beings, is sheer intellectual presumption, is indeed dogmatism of the worst kind.

Our great faith in the unique divinity of Jesus is then possibly true. We have got as far as to say that the fact may be as we believe. Can we take another step forward? Let us at least make the attempt. A man should go courageously wherever his instinct and surmise of truth lead. Some one asked a brave soldier, who stood for absolute loyalty to his commander under all circumstances, if he would run against a wall under orders, and his reply was that he assuredly would. There are different kinds of walls, and a brave man under the passion of duty may be able to run through a troop and jump over a wall; he may also find that the obstacle is only imaginary, and that the charge upon it reveals its insubstantial character. One must follow his surmise of truth: the dog has his scent of the game, and man has

his divination of fact; neither can ignore without inevitable failure that discerning, insistent, ultimate impulse.

All religious philosophy will admit that in God there is the Eternal Prototype of humanity. All intelligent religious thinking must recognize in the Deity an eternal basis for the nature, the advent, the career and ideal, of mankind. What possible interest can human beings have in the Infinite if society is not organized out of his life, if He is not the ground of its order and hope? What do we mean by the Being in whom every fatherhood in heaven and in earth is named, if our God is not a fullness of love, if He is not in his inmost nature an eternal society? Is there anything in the Infinite to account for humanity? That is the deepest question in religious philosophy, and thinkers are everywhere converging upon the conclusion that in God there is the Eternal Pattern of our race. And what is this Eternal Pattern, or Prototype, but the Son of Man of the synoptic gospels, the Only-begotten of the Fourth Gospel, the Mediator of the Pauline Epistles, the High Priest without descent, with neither beginning of days nor end of years, of the letter to the Hebrews, the God of God, Light of Light, begotten, not made, of the Nicene Creed, who for us men and our salvation came down, was made flesh, and became man? Granted that in all these phrases there is an effort to express the in-

expressible, a framing of words to set within definite forms the unbounded and ineffable; granted that the terms are but symbolic in their force, that they but hint at the whole unutterable truth, — the question comes, Is there an infinite reality behind the human symbol ; is the mental effort and result a trustworthy witness to the transcendent and eternal fact? That question all religious philosophy that is not serving as its own undertaker must answer in the affirmative. And the point in Christology for the faith of to-day to master, the centre round which the whole conflict of opinion is raging, is the special, unique relation of Jesus Christ to this Eternal Prototype of humanity in the Godhead. Here is where we are pressed by the strong Unitarian thinker; here is where little has been done, in the form of definite and conclusive thinking, to arrest his onward march. And, while the liberal hosts are pressing forward, the orthodox warriors are puzzled. Surrender they never will; the vital interests that are still renewed out of the bosom of Christ make that catastrophe impossible. But they see no way open at present by which their conviction of the transcendent relation of Christ to God can be pushed into the invincible form of reason. Thus we see our difficulty; we are sensible of our embarrassment; we recognize our problem, and that is more than half the battle. The great point, then, to be determined concerning Jesus is,

whether he is the supreme and unique representative of the humanity of God, the proper incarnation of the Filial in the being of the Infinite?

Conviction upon this point can result only from serious study of the character of Jesus. In the next section of this discussion the attempt will be made to indicate the ground upon which such a conviction may be founded. Here, however, let it be remarked that, as we study Jesus in the freedom and homage of true science, we come upon the august fact that so penetrated the mind of Horace Bushnell, and to which he has given an expression so simple and magnificent, the unclassifiable character of Christ. Reason has no place for him in the purely human categories, unless these are made the forms for an ideal humanity. If our human categories are the conceptions that cover actual human existence, Christ's being fills and transcends them; he is all that they require, and infinitely more. They make room for sin, and moral ignorance, and ethical limitation in every direction, and the general sore embarrassment to which all human beings are subject. They make no room for complete holiness, absolute knowledge of moral obligation, utter ethical integrity, and the freedom of the perfect Son of God. The prophetism of Jesus; his goodness, and his power as director of our whole higher civilization; his thought, his character, his authority, — cannot be put, without doing violence to

fact, in the same category with those of any other leader of mankind. There is in the Founder of the Christian religion a recognizable, a demonstrable transcendence of the actual human category. He is concerned with the Deity, implicated in his nature, associated with his purpose, under his will and spirit, in a manner secret, inapproachable, ineffable. This singularity of Christ is unmistakable in the Gospels, conspicuous in the Epistles, and conclusively evident over the whole field of more than eighteen hundred years of Christian experience and history. The form of the Son of Man is an eternal contrast, set in with immortal identities, to all his brethren. For the sake of the identities we must hold to the contrast. This singularity of Christ is the thing to be noted to-day; this assurance of union between God and humanity from the Christ who represents that union by the authority of a relation aboriginal and ineffable; this pledge of salvation, victorious evolution, or whatever name may be assigned it, from the Life that is human, and at the same time carries into history the secret of the Eternal Mind. This singularity of our Lord must be saved for the sake of the community with mankind that rests upon it. For I believe that only as we grasp the transcendent relation which Christ sustains to God can we retain for any length of time, and in effective living form, the other mighty insights that faith has won through

Him. Philosophy working upon history is to-day able to reach results similar to those revealed through the Person of Christ; but the fact must never be overlooked that philosophy did not originate the mighty truths that make us men. These truths were made known to our race by a vital process; they were brought forth by the sore travail of history. And philosophy must always be tried at the bar of history; the grand integrity of the historic reality must never be surrendered to an imperious speculative scheme. Lose out of faith the sense of the Eternal in Christ, fail to recognize in Him the presence of the Absolute, miss the fact that his nature is rooted in the Deity and is part of the nature of God, and we let go the sole adequate support for belief in the consubstantiation of humanity with divinity, and the consciousness that Jesus is the moral ideal for mankind. The Christ who embodies the deepest in God, who incarnates the Eternal Filial in the Infinite, is essential to hold for the world the great convictions of the kinship between man and his Maker, and the presence in Jesus of the true and final standard of human life. If the difference in Christ to humanity is the difference of the very God, then we can believe that the identity in Christ to our race is the identity of the very God. But if the contrast in the Lord to mankind does not reach to the being of God, if it is not the manifestation of the Eternal, if it

is only individual idiosyncracy, the mere separate, high-colored envelope in which his humanity comes into the world and preserves its secrets from the vulgar crowd with whom it must be thrown together, then it follows inevitably that the kinship of Christ to his brethren does not carry us to the heart of the universe, does not go beyond the bounds of space and time. Only a Christ whose antithesis to humanity means the presence of the very God can by his union with humanity assure us of union with God. Discredit the infinite difference, and we must doubt the sublime identity. This contention will be self-evident to those who see that we owe our faith in the humanity of God and in the divinity of man, not primarily to philosophy, but to the power of the historic process. Revelation is ever through life, the apprehension of the Infinite Personality through the finite; philosophy comes afterwards and finds her task. If we take Christ out of the historic process of revelation, we decapitate faith in the humanness of God and the divineness of man. We must remember the rock whence our belief was hewn, the pit whence it was dug. It was not in the world prior to Christ except in the form of intermittent prophetic dream, limited religious intuition, or vague, ineffectual philosophic fancy. It was not here as the ruling force in human civilization. The consubstantiation of man with God is the accepted and moulding

belief of Christendom to-day because of the revelation of the nature both of God and man made through Jesus Christ. Our whole higher faith is based upon the conviction that, inasmuch as the contrast in him to mankind means the contrast of the Absolute, the kinship in him to our race signifies the kinship of the Absolute. The historic process to which we owe our working and effectual faith may be said to consummate its service to the human spirit in the great declaration that the difference of Christ to mankind is the difference of God, and the identity of Christ to our race is the identity of God. When we ascend into the being of the Infinite upon the difference, we can with confidence descend into humanity upon the identity.

Once more let the question be put, Upon what do we build our belief in the essential correspondence between the Divine and the human? Is it a mere venturesome dream and nothing more? Is it a deduction from the anthropomorphism essential to human thought in all its forms? Is it an intuition into the moral worth of the soul in relation to the moral order of the universe? These all have much to do with it. The venturesome dream, the moral intuition, and the philosophical deduction have all been concerned in the history of the faith. But the faith acquired consistency and authority only through Christ; he found it but a vague and powerless conception, he left a

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fundamental certainty. I believe that the conception that man is the child of the Infinite will have the saddest fortune, and indeed remain in utter impotence, unless the Prototype of humanity lying eternally in the Godhead shall appear in an historic personality to vindicate the daring thought. The dream, intuition, philosophical deduction, or whatever name one may give it, has never been able, and it is hard to see that it can ever be able, apart from the high appreciation of the historic Christ, to support for any length of time, on a wide scale and under forms of controlling influence, faith in the essential sonship of all men to God, and in the obligation resting upon human beings here and now to live the transcendent life. Without philosophy, history lies in confusion; and without history, philosophy is insane. The Incarnation is the assertion of the divine meaning of history, and the vindication of the high calling of philosophy; but history and philosophy in denial of the Eternal Christ lose all high seriousness, and become little more than "sound and fury."

VIII.

The path to this eternal contrast between Christ and all the other sons of God is his perfect humanity. There is in Christ the note of moral completeness, and the root of this must be his unique relation to the Deity. There is, indeed,

a transcendence in the very nature of man, and here again Christ differentiates himself from humanity out of the heart of a great identity. Man's intelligence is supernatural in its origin. Heredity and environment can do much, but they cannot originate mind. The impressiveness of genius, descending, as it so often does, from a poor parentage, and rising up amid the least stimulating surroundings, is overpowering from this point of view. One might be tempted to believe that mind is wholly the product of heredity and circumstances, were it not for the revelation which genius makes, when it starts up in full splendor, amid the darkest conditions. One looks at Abraham Lincoln, and one sees that his intellectual power cannot be accounted for by simply regarding him as the child of his mother, the son of his father, and the product of his circumstances. These in no way account for the man: they contradict at all points the character of the phenomenon; they make it impossible for the impartial historian to believe that such a mind should have come from such a source. One of the first statesmen of the nineteenth century, and one of the wisest and strongest rulers that ever shaped the destinies of a great people, has in his parentage and circumstances absolutely nothing to account for his intellectual power. The same is true of many another man of genius. Robert Burns had an eminently respectable an-

cestry, but one looks in vain in it for any hint of the poet's gifts. Those eyes that saw into the world's heart, and that read with unerring vision and sympathetic passion the great secrets of human love, and that voice which set them to the music of words that will ring down the grooves of time to their farthest limit, carry one into the supernatural for their explanation. It must never be forgotten that Shakespeare was the son of a very humble father. The greatest genius of the modern world had his birth in little Stratford-on-Avon, and again it is simple mockery to try to account for him upon the naked principles of heredity and environment. Such an explanation is an insult to the common sense of mankind. Thus the greatest service of genius, appearing as the child of lowly parentage and amid humble circumstances, is the proclamation of its high origin in the eternal world. It becomes, in the second place, a revelation of the source of our common humanity in the same supersensible realm. By its grand antithesis to ordinary human endowment, genius is strong enough to show its own origin, and the origin of its humbler brethren, in the wisdom of God. Genius is rooted in a vast identity with common men; but out of the heart of this kinship grows a difference equally vast and irreducible.

The same line of remark applies to the distinction of sainthood. The old question returns,

Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? No; it is impossible. Environment cannot originate goodness; at its best, environment is but the condition of character, it can never produce it. The great effort to-day all over the civilized world is after a purified, a transformed environment, and with that endeavor every noble man must be in deepest sympathy. By all means let us seek beautiful homes for our fellow-men who are doing so much of the hardest and most essential work of the world, and let us surround them with the best possible physical, intellectual, moral, and political conditions. Let us have the noblest domestic economy, the finest schools, the wisest and strongest government, the forms of industrial life that are the nearest practicable approach to fairness, and let us everywhere strengthen the moral and spiritual power of the church. Humanity has had odds against its intelligence and virtue far too long; the sea has been too stormy for the craft that has had to weather it. A great deal more can be done to soften the conditions of human existence than even our noblest dreams imply, and still the race have enough left of resisting residuum for the development of the moral life. It is not the gospel of an improved environment that one fears: it is the irrational hope that grows up under its protection. Environment, at its best, cannot create love. Goodness is, again, supersensuous and divine in its origin. Nothing

good can come out of Nazareth even when conformed to the character of the city of God. Goodness must come, if it is to come at all, out of the personal will in surrender to the Eternal Will, out of the finite soul in the struggle inspired and supported by the Infinite Soul. The first service of sainthood is that it proclaims its own transcendence; it is not of this world. Its second service is that it shows that all moral life is transcendent. Goodness is born out of the Infinite through the choice and love and victorious struggle of the faithful human spirit. All intelligence and all high character are transcendent, and have their source in the mind and heart of God.

Now it is in the range of Christ's transcendence of his earthly conditions that we note the complete uniqueness of his Person. The mere fact of the transcendence of earthly conditions joins him to the race of which he is the perfect specimen; the extent and character of this transcendence call for a deeper origin in God for him than for the rest of mankind. We speak of the difference that he presents to all other men as being simply one of degree, and we are thus misled by a word. All real difference is a difference in kind; the tests of more and less do not cover the case. The fact is, they are qualitative as well as quantitative. The given quantity and the specified quality are unlike, are different, and

the difference is real. It is a question of possession and non-possession. The stone that weighs a ton has weight, but it has not the weight of the stone of one hundred tons. The difference is an ultimate fact, and all real difference is a difference in kind. One thing possesses it, and another does not; one person has it, while another is without it. "Likeness" is a word for the bond of union between the unlike, and "difference" is a term for the absolute individuality of beings that are forever akin. There are two laws in creation, two in the nature of God, and the difference in the universe, wherever it is real, is as important as the identity. We cannot maintain the world in which we live, we shall destroy its fair order, unless we combine both in thought and in activity the two eternal principles of kinship and contrast. And thus we are brought back to the Christ who is one with all men and yet different. His transcendence, while it reveals the transcendence of all intelligence and all moral love, appears of such range and character as to set itself apart from that of all his brethren. It is an obvious fact that Nazareth cannot account for Christ; we see at once that the mere earthly conditions of heredity and environment can in no single case explain the fact either of intelligence or sainthood. But with the intelligence and character of Christ before us, revealed through his thought and his service, we go further. We

affirm that the Eternal is under a unique relation and exercise in the production of him. In his age Jesus stands alone; there are no conditions of ancestry or circumstances that can possibly account for him. All men, either in their rational endowment or in their moral character, or in both, transcend time; but Christ alone transcends all time. His thought after two thousand years needs no revision. His conceptions of God, of man, and human society are ultimate conceptions; intellectual power cannot go beyond them, can never even master their entire content. His spirit has upon it the mark of finality, his character is the full impression upon humanity of the moral perfection of the Deity. The ultimateness of Christ's thought and the finality of his spirit differentiate his transcendence from that of the greatest and best of mankind, and ground his being in the Godhead in a way solitary and supreme.

Not only is there in our Lord the absence of defect; there is also complete realization of ideal manhood. In any adequate view of him, the negative toward sin must be supplemented with the positive toward righteousness. Peter stood in his presence and cried, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."[1] The relation here is of the sinful to the sinless; and as the apostle stood to his Master, so all suceeding generations

[1] Luke v. 8.

of noble men have felt in the same august presence. It is impossible to enter the domain of Christ's teaching without instant apprehension of the immeasurable moral difference presented to the spirit that even the best men carry there. There is no need of preaching. The conscience of each man, the conscience of each age, the conscience of the world, instantly finds and reports the contrast, and in its name brings into human life the moral rebuke of the Infinite. The introduction of men to Christ has ever been accompanied on their part with feelings of utter unworthiness. The sense of correction that Christ imparts, the consciousness of defect and unworthiness that he elicits, and the shadow of moral failure under which they live who are nearest to him, reveal something that we do well to consider. The consciousness of sin is largely the creation of Christ. Men like Paul, and Luther, and Edwards show this most impressively. Their sense of the error and corruption of life is born in the Lord's presence, it is deepened with the progress of the years, and to the last they are distressed with the defect of existence that Christ's character inevitably discovers. The consciousness of sin that fills our Western civilization, that is deepest in the noblest spirits, is but the stern report of the moral contrast that our Master presents to the world even at its best. The moon at the full is but a hemisphere of light; the obverse

side is a hemisphere of darkness. The half that lies in the great illumination must make the half that lies in unrelieved gloom terribly aware of itself. Men standing in the glory of Christ's character often look as if they were as radiant as he; but the splendor is borrowed, and, besides, it covers only the side of life that is turned toward him. There is another side to every life, — the half that is turned away from the Lord, the vast obverse of our humanity that rolls on in Christless gloom. And the brightness that falls from their Master upon part of their character makes his best disciples feel the horror of great darkness in which so much of their being moves. We see Christ in Gethsemane in his agony and bloody sweat. It is the most momentous hour in human history. It is the crisis that is to show the essential nature of the spirit under trial. Beside Jesus are the elect of his disciples, — Peter, James, and John. It is also the supreme hour in their lives, — the emergency that is to reveal their inmost character. What now is the issue of the common trial? When the world was most in need of a loyal Master, and when loyalty cost an unspeakable price, Christ was true; when the Master was most in need of friendship, and when friendship was made easy and almost inevitable by the tender solicitation of the sublime sufferer, his disciples were false. It is no injustice to say that, taking life as a whole, and includ-

ing motive as well as conduct, spirit no less than behavior, here we have the difference between Christ and humanity. We note the community in temptation; we must also note the eternal difference in the issue. As Christ was to his elect disciples in the hour of their common crisis, so is Christ to mankind. There is an identity divinely significant, but it rests upon a difference as deep as the perfection of God.

And even if we anticipate the time when the relation of the disciple to his Master shall no longer be that of the sinful to the sinless and holy, we simply come upon a new and finer form of the eternal contrast. For the relation of the soul to Christ will forever be that of the imperfect to the perfect, the incomplete to the complete. Incompleteness must be the note of our human existence through all time. We follow on to know the Lord. The spring and zest of our life are here. We follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. His perfection is the goal at which our imperfection aims; his fullness is that upon which humanity's defect forever draws. This is the central truth of the Transfiguration. That great scene has first a factual life, and then a prophetic. It is first of all the revelation, in the midst of his humiliation, of the moral perfection that dwelt in Christ. It is the discovery of the unutterable splendor of goodness that lived in him, the infinite reserve of his being, — that

reserve upon which the church in all subsequent times was to draw, and which was to remain under that drain without the shadow of reduction. One cannot study this scene without feeling that the moral glory has its source in a difference of being that goes back into the Godhead; that the awful reserve of life, for a moment uncovered, is the evidence of a transcendent nature; that here indeed we have the manifestation of the Deity in Christ. This is the factual side, the actual disclosure of the fathomless glory of the Lord. There is, however, the prophetic side. The Master and his disciples upon Tabor are not to each other as the divine and the human, but as the perfect and the imperfect. For it is the high destiny of mankind to go on after this goodness, to compass more and more of it, and to gather into its heart an ever larger measure of the excellence of Christ. What Christ is in complete realization, that humanity is prophetically; he is the perfect humanity after which we must forever strive, and short of which we must forever fall. The difference between Jesus and his disciples upon Mount Tabor is again the difference between him and mankind. It is the difference between complete realization and immortal prophecy. And, again, the moral contrast is the sign of the fact that Christ's being has a relation to God transcendent and unique. It was the vision of the endless perfection of Jesus that for Athana-

sius set him apart from the world, while it brought him infinitely near. "And, in a word," to quote another striking passage from the work of that acute and serious mind, "the achievements of the Saviour, resulting from his becoming man, are of such kind and number that, if one should wish to enumerate them, he may be compared to men who gaze at the expanse of the sea and wish to count its waves. For as one cannot take in the whole of the waves with his eyes, for those that are coming on baffle the sense of him that attempts it, so for him that would take in all the achievements of Christ in the body, it is impossible to take in the whole, even by reckoning them up, as those which go beyond his thought are more than those he thinks he has taken in. Better is it, then, not to aim at speaking of the whole, where one cannot do justice even to a part, but, after mentioning one more, to leave the whole for you to marvel at. For all alike are marvelous, and wherever a man turns his glance he may behold on that side the divinity of the Word, and be struck with exceeding great awe."[1]

We come, then, to the great conclusion that that which seems to put the Master on a level with mankind — the fact that he is the moral ideal of the world — is indeed the chief sign of his differentiation from the human race. That Christ should be the acknowledged moral ideal

[1] *The Incarnation*, ch. liv. 4, 5.

means nothing else than the unattainableness of his goodness, the utter perfection of his character. The ethical significance of Christ is infinite. And this infinitude of Christ is not a dream from the brain of a devotee, it is the sublime assertion of history; it is the meaning of the unattainable moral idealism of which he is the living embodiment. For the moral goal must ever be a flying goal; the standard to which we are to grow must be ever rising; the type to which we are to be conformed must have in it inexhaustible fullness. Paul is affirming the essential infinitude, the true deity of Christ, when he says, "I press on, if so be that I may apprehend that for which also I was apprehended by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself yet to have apprehended: but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."[1] The goal is the flying goal; the high calling is ever lifting itself into the infinite heights of God in Christ Jesus. We behold Paul in his eager, swift, unresting pursuit of the highest in Christ, and at the end we hear him speaking of the far-off crown of righteousness to which he looks forward in inspired wonder as the incentive and reward of his heroic endeavor. We behold the Christian centuries pursuing Christ. Genera-

[1] Philippians iii. 12–14.

tion after generation of exalted spirits have beheld in Christ the supreme beatitude of existence. They have sought to compass it by the most eager and strenuous toil. They have found unspeakable good; but their final confession has ever been of the inexhaustible fullness in Christ. Thus the chase of the centuries after Christ, this noble pursuit with its eternal failure to overtake or even approach the receding and growing splendor, is the most moving and amazing proclamation of the infinitude of our Lord. The moral ideal for mankind that he is, and that seems to so many to put him on a level utterly human, becomes the sign of his eternal difference from our race and lifts him into identity of being with God. That our Lord is the moral ideal of humanity implies these two things, — that he is one with humanity, and that he transcends it infinitely. It implies that upon the difference, the deity in his nature, rest the other imperishable truths, — the kinship between God and man, and the presence in history of the moral ideal of the world. In that wonder of modern skill, the Forth Bridge, the mighty span of seventeen hundred feet is sprung from pillars sunk deep in the heart of the earth. One looks upon the vast superstructure; one beholds ships of any reach of mast sailing under the arch dwarfed into insignificance; one sees the swift passage from limit to limit of the traffic and travel of the Island; one takes in the utility

and majesty of the stupendous structure, and then asks upon what does all this rest? For an answer to that question, one must follow the arch to the water's edge; one must pierce below the floods. Down there out of sight, hidden in the bed of the river, resting upon the bosom of the earth, are the sunken pillars that hold aloft what is so useful to life and so imposing and amazing to the eye. It is thus with our faith in Christ. The discernible part of him, the sublime superstructure of his humanity and service, the imitable and reproducible characteristics in him, the high career over which faith goes in victorious pursuit of the ethical goal of human life, and in confident grasp of the sonship of all men to God, is based upon the inimitable, the unreproducible, the ineffable in Christ. Below time, deeper than the relations of Creator and creature, his being goes; he is the Eternal Humanity in the life of the Infinite.

CHAPTER III.

THE SIGNIFICANCE TO-DAY OF A SUPREME CHRISTOLOGY.

Τίς γὰρ ἔγνω νοῦν κυρίου. — Romans xi. 34.
ἡμεῖς δὲ νοῦν Χριστοῦ ἔχομεν. — 1 Corinthians ii. 16.

"If, then, not only the law which is upon the earth is a shadow, but also all our life which is upon the earth is the same, and we live among the nations under the shadow of Christ, we must see whether the truth of all these shadows may not come to be known in that revelation." — ORIGEN, *De Principiis*, Book II. ch. vi. 7.

"We beseech the Father of Lights, if he is the God of infinite charity we proclaim him to be, to tell us whether all our thoughts of freedom and truth have proceeded from the Father of Lies, — whether for eighteen centuries we have been propagating a mockery when we have said that there is a Son of God, who is the Truth, and who can make us free." — F. D. MAURICE, *Theological Essays*, p. 90.

"For my own part, I think that sympathy is one condition of historical insight; and if I had no sympathy with that Old Testament religion as the ripe fruit of which I regard primitive Christianity, I should know that my labors would be smitten with sterility. . . . We will study the products of the soil, and gather such precious gifts as we can for Him to whom the star will point us." — Dr. T. K. CHEYNE, *Bampton Lectures*, p. 2.

CHAPTER III.

THE SIGNIFICANCE TO-DAY OF A SUPREME CHRISTOLOGY.

THE high Christology for which I contended in the last chapter, I believe to be of the greatest moment in reference to the intellectual life characteristic of the time. Of course it is believed that the transcendent view of the Person of Jesus is in and of itself the true view; it is also held to be the regulative principle in all valid thinking upon ultimate things, the great constructive and conservative force in Christian theology. Without this guide, students will lose themselves in the wilderness of mere biblical learning; they will have no oracle to question concerning the worth of new theological theory, no standard of truth whereby its value can be measured; they will be shallow optimists or prophets of despair before the vast social problems of the age; they will be unable to raise any effectual barrier against the materialism, philosophical and practical, which confronts this generation. But with Christ as Lord, and with the Lord as the Spirit, one may hope for great popular gain to the Bible from the

new and illuminating scholarship through which it is passing; one may look for a scheme of Christian theology more accordant with the facts of human history, the moral reason of mankind, and the highest in revelation; one may entertain the most exalted social ideal with the confidence of intelligence as well as the warmth of love, and take part in the stupendous enterprise of realizing the reign of righteousness in the earth without danger of falling a victim either to fanaticism or despair; and, lastly, one may feel one's self qualified to resist all forms of opinion that belittle the significance of the spirit of man.

To every great movement there are two sides. It is rich with possible good to mankind, and it is big with possible disaster. Leadership is the grand permanent necessity of humanity. The simplest form of this necessity is the leadership which every man must exercise over himself. The control of the energies of thought, the discipline of the forces of passion, the drill of all the great psychic possibilities, their larger and better organization, and the handling of them, as a great general does his army, is part of the everlasting obligation resting upon rational life. Another form of the same necessity meets one in the family. Here is a movement of the most beautiful promise, and at the same time under constant menace. Almost all homes start on the equal footing of great instincts. Honor, self-sacrifice,

love, and the soul of a transforming friendship lie abundant in the vast instinctive forces upon which the household is founded. These are the magnificent materials out of which, by discipline, drill, organization, and wise leadership, the invincible standing army of domestic happiness may be developed. The victory or defeat of family ideals, the honor or the shame of the home, simply means leadership, or the absence of it. One might trace the working of the same principle through all the widening circles of business enterprise and political life. But it is time to give this thought the direction for which it is here introduced. The gravest question that can come before the responsible leaders in the religious world in any generation concerns the control of the best movements. To have a race-horse get away from its driver is bad, to have an express train going at full speed leave the rails is greatly worse, and to have our planet escape from the grasp of gravitation would be a supreme calamity. The richer the enterprise is in possible benefits to the world, the deeper should be the anxiety for its wise control. Looking backward over the history of the church, one is profoundly impressed with the importance of adequate leadership. The vast significance of Stephen lies in the fact that he began the rescue of Christianity from the incompetent hands of Jewish disciples, that he spoke one word of magnificent in-

sight for the universalism of the gospel; and the larger merit of the apostle Paul is best seen from this point of view. Modern New Testament scholarship has made conspicuous the grandeur of Paul's contention, the breadth of the principle upon which he stood, and the unparalleled service which he rendered in emancipating Christianity from Judaism, in exhibiting it in its independent and surpassing grace, and in employing with such wisdom and devotion his consummate genius for almost every variety of leadership, in guiding to its infinitely beneficent issues the divine movement inaugurated by his Master. One hardly dares picture what the religion of Jesus would have come to if it had been left exclusively in the hands of men like Peter and James. The fact that Stephen and Paul and John, and not they, were in chief command, has changed the character of the Christian centuries, — has indeed made possible all the new emancipations that the church has experienced. When, in the third century, Christianity came into vital contact with Greek philosophy, the beneficence of the issue was due, humanly speaking, to the fact that a Clement, an Origen, an Athanasius controlled the great experiment; and later, when Roman law and institution and custom became the rich environment, the substantial message of Jesus was saved through competent and masterly leadership. So long as the Reformation was under the

direction of Luther and Calvin and Zwingli and Knox, it brought forth its best fruits; when the mighty forces passed into other and inferior hands, all manner of evil results followed. The counter Reformation in the Roman Church got its example and incitement from the great German, but it got its opportunity through the waste into which the original river of God had run. One of the greatest movements in human history, the French Revolution, became an immeasurable tragedy through want of a masterful guiding mind. Out of that terrible vital drama vast benefits, profound lessons, and lasting impulses have come to the modern world; but had there been an adequate presiding character, a man like Cromwell or Washington or Lincoln, instead of a moral earthquake we should have had an orderly and far less tragic evolution. The New England Unitarian movement was fortunate in its first great leaders. The men who began the enterprise had a great message to deliver, the reality of the Eternal Fatherhood and the fact of a divine humanity. Men like Channing and Hedge and Peabody contributed to Christian thought something which, if it had possessed in early times, it had long ago lost; and when they had done their special work they began to wonder if, after all, there might not be a diviner meaning in the great historic symbols than they had dreamed. Especially is this true of Hedge and

Peabody. The conviction kept gaining upon them that, after having done their positive work of vindicating the real Fatherhood of God and the universal human sonship, there might be a possible return, not indeed to the Orthodoxy with which they had broken, and which every one now recognizes as a thing of the past, but to the essential and eternal truth hidden in the old creeds, and which is so much greater than the movement represented by them. This meditation of a possible return, through a profounder interpretation of historic Christianity, may be traced in several of the great leaders of the first generation of Unitarians. This was one of the many indications of their genius. If that movement, which stands associated with so much that is great in our history, and whose roll-call includes so large a company of men distinguished alike for intellectual power and high character, should spend its force and run out, it will be owing to this one thing, more than to all others, that its leaders to-day have given up this meditation of a deeper return to the past. The eternal gospel lies there: it looks out through all the symbols of Christian history; it has meanings in it which the old names cover but do not exhaust, and which our modern thinkers do not begin to fathom; it has room in it for the great Unitarian contribution, and for every other vital conception that the struggles of noble men have forced afresh upon the attention

of the world. The Unitarian movement has its opportunity here: it must contemplate some kind of a return, — a return consistent with its magnificent protest and achievement, — or it must engage in a serious meditation with death. Its future depends upon the wisdom and courage of its leaders. The Broad Church party in the Church of England is another example. So long as it was under the direction of the great and devout mind of Maurice, the party stood for the highest things in the faith of all Christians. Its philosophy of Christianity and Christian institutions is the deepest in our English tongue. It was a school of thought full of light and heat at the same time, and while its master remained at its head it was a positive, inclusive, world-enriching movement. Since his death a new generation has risen up, and the school has more and more tended to lose definite Christian characteristics and to become a denying spirit. It lives under the shadow of agnosticism, and rejoices to show how very little it is necessary to believe in order to belong to the Church of England. The sceptre is passing from its hands, and that which began its career of influence, beautiful as the Syrian river Abana issuing from the snows of Lebanon, goes to waste, like it, in the burning wilderness of negation. Whenever a school of thought ceases to be constructive, in the true sense creative; whenever it becomes predomi-

nantly negative, — its influence is on the wane, its days are numbered. The world is a vast reality; Christianity is, as Goethe said, an infinite thing; and the multitudes of serious people will forever refuse to follow the men who lead no whither, and who spend their force in reducing to a poor minimum the significance of our human universe.

If, now, one asks what has been the great note of successful leadership in the past, the answer is at hand. The men who have been, in the fullest measure and the noblest manner, under the prophetic mind of the Lord, the masters who have been conscious of their Master in heaven, and who have held the task at which they toiled to the judgment seat of Christ, have been the great leaders in Christian history. In so far as they have been subject to this supernal prophetic mind, they have been able to avert the possible disaster; they have been strong enough to realize the possible benefit to the new age of the new development of the eternal truth. In so far as Paul, and Origen, and Augustine, and Luther, and Edwards, and the New England Unitarians have escaped from the mind of Christ, or from the logic of that mind, they have become eccentric, they have at last landed their followers in Dante's serious predicament: —

> "In the midway of this our mortal life,
> I found me in a gloomy wood, astray,
> Gone from the path direct; and e'en to tell,
> It were no easy task, how savage wild

That forest, how robust and rough its growth,
Which to remember only, my dismay
Renews, in bitterness not far from death." [1]

We may assume it as an axiom, that every new movement in human thinking and in human affairs that escapes from the leadership of the Lord will go to waste. It will prove a sort of Alcibiades. The vaster it is in promise, the greater will be the wreck if the control of the Supreme Mind in history is despised and rejected.

It is this sense of safety only in the leadership of Christ that makes the present theological situation so serious. Hitherto the fight has been for liberty; the problem now is the wise and beneficent use of our liberty. The victory for freedom of Christian scholarship does not by any means end the war. The victory for wisdom remains to be won. This is mainly the phase of the campaign upon which the Christian thinkers of this generation have now entered. They have won their freedom. They have inaugurated a new theological movement; it is gaining greater headway with every year. But they have not yet subdued this new power to the sovereignty of the Lord. And, while this continues to be the state of the case, the whole thing is but a doubtful experiment. Incidental benefits and emancipations, one may readily admit, have already come; but that a universal and permanent change for the

[1] Inferno, canto i., opening lines.

better has arrived must not be too hastily assumed. The philosophy of Christianity and of man's life in this world, with which this generation has largely broken, contained elements of true greatness and everlasting moment; and the forms of human character that rose up under its influence stand in history invested with a noble dignity, and alive still with a terrible passion for righteousness. I believe that the possibility of a universal and permanent improvement in the working philosophy of life has arrived; but whether the possibility shall become actual is indeed the large and serious problem before the Christian thinkers of to-day. This new birth of the Christian centuries is already here. It is a goodly child, but it represents in its blood and brain a double inheritance. It comes from the Lord from heaven, by way of the first man who was of the earth earthy. Men of the new type of thought have had their great festival hours; they have exchanged sentiments of joy and hope over the prophetic new-comer. It has seemed to them like the visit of the dayspring from on high, a light to enlighten the nations, and the latest glory of the church. But the festival hour is gone; the years of wise education and direction of the new life have come. A sword shall assuredly pierce through the heart of the leaders of to-day if they shall fail to subdue this fresh birth of time to the rule of the Highest, if they

shall cease to remember that the advent of a vaster and nobler faith must mean the vaster and nobler advent of Christ. Unless he is the Alpha and Omega of this new movement it will end in vanity, it will become the despair of its supporters. The purpose of this chapter has now been, it is hoped, clearly indicated, and we may go on to consider several of the greater religious interests of the time in relation to the mind of Christ, and the first must be the higher criticism.

I.

The Bible is the monumental record of the monumental revelation of the mind of God to mankind. The great instrument of this disclosure of the thought of the Eternal is prophetic genius, and this mediating instrumentality becomes supreme and final in the prophetic mind of Jesus Christ. The Bible, therefore, presents a twofold problem to the modern world: its production is a question for the historian, and its character concerns the ethical and theological student. The Bible as a collection of books has a history, and the problem of the higher criticism is to pierce through the crude masses of received opinion, and to reach as near as possible to the actual historic process. In a true sense, the Bible belongs to the historical and literary scholar, just as the Homeric poems and all other ancient literature belong to him. Our sacred

writings were produced at certain times, in certain largely important circumstances, in certain parts, separated by intervals longer or shorter, and by certain men. To fix for all readers of these books the time of their production; to define the widely significant environments into which they were born, and in reaction against which they grew and took mature shape in the thought and style of the author; to find the real literary unities, and to dissolve apparent wholes into their parts, and in each case to assign each distinct composition to its real author, — this is the great enterprise of the higher critic. When one considers its scope, and measures it against the largest possible learning and the keenest critical power, one may well read the books of these scholars with Carlyle's maxim of "wise memory and wise oblivion" in mind. Still, the Old and New Testaments, as a literary product in time, belong to the historian. He must carry to the achievement of his task only the interests of historical science; he must be allowed all the time needful for the accomplishment of an enterprise of such vast reach; he must mine away amid growing heaps of débris and confusion, while the vein that he is working continues unexhausted; he must plan for a thousand generations of successors, who will bring to the uncompleted work an improved equipment and ampler powers; he must idealize his individual undertaking into part

of the historical task of humanity. Nothing can, for one moment, be allowed to interfere with the interests of this great department of science. The question has nothing mystical or transcendent about it; it is simply a question of fact. As the heavenly bodies, their relations, their movements, and their times and seasons, are the problem of astronomical science, so the sacred writings that compose our Bible, their date, their environment, their parts, and their authorship, are a problem for historical science. These questions do not in the first instance at all concern faith; they concern scholarship, and they can be settled only by scholarship.

But the Bible transcends the mere historian. So far as it is outward fact, it falls within his domain; but so far as it is a body of ethical and spiritual truth, it falls within the concern of humanity. The revelation of God as a record belongs to learning; but as a moral and spiritual content it belongs to all prophetic souls. It is this double character of the Bible that is apt to be forgotten at the present time. Astronomers are busy with the determination of the condition of things on the planet Mars. They are trying to spell out its history, the character of the highest forms of the life that may be there; and occasionally we hear of interesting discoveries concerning our nearest solar neighbor and our possible brethren, of whom we seem to have got-

ten the inside track. Now this aspect of the militant planet is of great interest, but it is not the only aspect. Mars in one sense belongs to astronomers, and in another and far loftier sense it belongs to humanity. The service which it may ultimately render to our race through science may be wonderful, but even that service will be insignificant compared with what it has done for mankind, since the morning of time, through the ministry of beauty. The Mars of science works out its benefits very slowly; the Mars of poetry is forever in the perfect fulfillment of its mission; in regard to the former there may be doubt and hesitation, but with respect to the latter there can be only certain and limitless joy. Whether the lines on its surface be canals may for a long time remain a matter of debate; but souls with serious purpose and a sense of the beautiful have ever felt what Longfellow expresses so exquisitely: —

> "Is it the tender star of love?
> The star of love and dreams?
> Oh no! from that blue tent above,
> A hero's armor gleams.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "O star of strength! I see thee stand
> And smile upon my pain;
> Thou beckonest with thy mailed hand
> And I am strong again."

And as the star has an interest beyond the sphere of science, transcending utterly the work of the

astronomer, so the Bible has a significance not only for the historian, but also for humanity. It is this last and highest significance that must be conserved, and it can be done, in my judgment, only as the mind of Christ is carried through the entire collection of these sacred writings as the absolute judge of their worth.

Distinct as are the historical and spiritual aspects of the Bible to the scholarly mind, it must be confessed that they are in popular thought in the saddest confusion. The results of the higher criticism are simply bewildering to the average layman. They thus perplex him because he has regarded the Bible as carrying with it in every book, chapter, and verse the evidence of its divine worth, because he has failed to judge it by the Person of Christ. And all men must share in this confusion if there is nothing fixed in Christian faith. The higher criticism mutilates our Bible, if the Bible does not witness to something greater than itself. This modern method of investigation comes in the name of pure scholarship, with the authority of historical science, and destroys the letter. If one does not reach the Christ through both Testaments, if one cannot invoke him for the determination of their worth, one must have a horror of the higher criticism. To retain profound and living faith in the Bible to-day, one must be able to carry through the new views of its genesis, the dissolution of its

parts, and the reversions of its history a divine standard of value. That standard of value is the mind of Christ. With the Christ of the New Testament and Christian history, representing in himself the character and purpose of God, and the drift of the universe in accordance with that purpose, faith will obtain new insights and a richer sense of the progress of revelation from following the destructive path of all sane criticism. Belief in the miraculous need not be surrendered, but it must be relegated to its place of due subordination. The errant element, particularly in the Old Testament, will be frankly admitted, and the introductory and imperfect nature of the whole Hebrew dispensation. Paul's startling comparisons in his second letter to the Corinthians [1] between the dispensations of Moses and of Christ will then be understood, and the magnificent argument of the Epistle to the Hebrews on the imperfect character of the older revelation, and on the catholicity and finality of Christianity, will be appreciated at its full superlative worth. The way in which Paul the Pharisee, the passionate devotee of Judaism, was able to emancipate himself, is of the highest moment to the modern student of the Bible. But for the mind of Christ, it is impossible to conceive of this emancipation; or, if it be possible on the supposition of a lapse into atheism, this is not the transcending

[1] 2 Cor. iii.

of an old faith, but the contradiction of it, the abandonment of all faith. Paul was enabled to occupy a higher point of vision: he was lifted to an elevation from which he could behold other and brighter worlds; he was furnished with an ideal, the mind of the Lord, and thus could determine the defect of the literature upon which he had grown to manhood. It is indeed wonderful to see how the Jewish disciples of Jesus move out from under the sovereignty of the Old Testament. It no longer satisfies them; they have been lifted beyond its scope; they live in a new and diviner world. The secret of this easy and almost unconscious self-emancipation lies in the Christ ideal that filled their thoughts. They possess an absolute measure for truth, and righteousness, and beauty; Christ had made them free. No higher critic to-day, who remains a believer in God and in an historic revelation, transcends the orthodox tradition about the Bible more completely than Paul transcended the Jewish tradition concerning the Hebrew Scriptures. And what is true of him holds equally of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews and the apostle John. The freedom of movement is something amazing. At the same time these men possess a new sense of the worth of the old revelation. And this should be true now. The mind of Christ reveals the defect of the Old Testament; it brings into impressive relief its imperishable

value, — the depth and vitality of its movement in the spirit, the greatness of its human interest, the ocean expanse and profundity of its literature, its inapproachable prophetic genius, its towering preëminence among all pre-Christian forms of the revelation of God to mankind. With the Master of John and Paul as our Master, there need be no special pleading for the Old Testament, no fine-spun theories to reconcile it as a totality with the Absolute Righteousness, no miserable apologetic identifying it to its last word with the Infinite Love. The Sermon on the Mount is the great revision of the Hebrew faith. In that discourse there is outlined, in a few brief paragraphs and with the deepest reverence, a method of criticism infinitely more radical than any presented by the scholarship of to-day. The whole past is brought under the judgment of its ideal as interpreted by the supreme Idealist. There could not be a severer test; and the continued application of it to the Bible will give that book its legitimate place in Christian faith.

The old argument against the higher criticism from the fact that Jesus used the Old Testament, and which assumes that if Moses had not written the Pentateuch and David the Psalms and Solomon Ecclesiastes, — which takes for granted that if the traditional view of the origin and composition of the Hebrew literature had not been true, Christ would have told his disciples so, — is self-

evidently worthless. The principle of the Incarnation involves an accommodation of the Eternal to temporal conditions; and it was clearly beyond even the power of Divinity in three short years to sweep the Jewish mind clean of all its errors and superstitions. The reserve of Christ, in dealing with an age at all points so immeasurably below him, is one of the notes of his surpassing greatness. He knew that the individual, the age, and the race must outgrow crude and erroneous opinion, — that, indeed, growth is the only possible emancipation. He must, therefore, have passed over a thousand foolish notions as if they were not; he was, in fact, under the necessity of introducing his original and absolute teaching in the current forms of thought which were frequently unsatisfactory. Employing the principle of accommodation as far as perfect fidelity to the truth would allow, he was even then largely misunderstood. Possessing the gift of communication, the genius of the teacher in a measure absolutely inapproachable, he was not able wholly to overcome the obstacle of human stupidity. When one thinks of the continuous act of accommodation, the perpetual rational self-sacrifice involved in the career of Jesus, one must regard as nonsensical the claim that, if the Jewish tradition about the origin, date, and authorship of the various books of the Old Testament had been erroneous, he would have put himself on record

against it. He had a whole world of mistakes and superstitions and lies against which to go on record, and he had no time for one so comparatively insignificant. The Old Testament, as a question for the historian, did not touch the mind of Jesus, so far as we can see. It was an aspect of the Hebrew Bible that did not pressingly concern him, and that he thought he could leave to his far-off disciples in Germany and Britain and America to settle among themselves. But while the Old Testament in its purely historical aspect lies entirely outside the work that Christ set for himself, still, in another sense, the fact that it was his sacred book is of the utmost importance. While he transcends it infinitely, he nevertheless makes conspicuous its permanent interest. On the Hebrew Scriptures he was educated; from them he preached the sermon that marked the beginning of his career;[1] and his mission was the divine continuation of their whole higher spirit. No one can go with Jesus through his great initial temptation, and witness the weapons by which he wins his triple victory, without a new and profounder sense of reverence for the Old Testament. Out of the Book of Deuteronomy, over which the higher critics have had their battles, came the three sentences by which Jesus kept his heart and repelled the tempter: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth

[1] Luke iv. 16–22.

out of the mouth of God;" "thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God;" "thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." These are the weapons of the Spirit drawn from the vast armory of the Old Testament, with which Jesus won his victory for himself and for humanity.[1] One must recall the fact that the hymn which he sung with his disciples at the close of the Last Supper was from the Hebrew Psalter;[2] and that again, in his agony and bloody sweat, when the supreme duty of surrender at any cost to the will of God appeared before him, it came in the words of another Psalm:[3] "I delight to do thy will, O my God." While, in his final hours upon the cross, as at all times during his life, he had thoughts and experiences for which the Old Testament had no words, yet it is profoundly interesting to find Christ using its sacred utterances in commending his spirit into the hands of his Father.[4] There could be no higher testimony to the spiritual worth of the sacred writings thus employed.

Further, Jesus everywhere appears as the fulfillment of the forward look of the Old Testament, the grand historic vindication of the sad but invincible optimism of the Hebrew prophets. The whole purpose, spirit, and progressive interior movement recorded in the Old Testament

[1] Deut. vi. 13, 16; viii. 3.
[2] Ps. cxiii., cxviii.
[3] Ps. xl. 8.
[4] Ps. xxxi. 5.

finds its consummation in Christ, and in this way he becomes its absolute judge. All that points forward toward him, all that in any way truly prepares for his coming, all the thoughts and enterprises of prophetic Israel that are capable of contributing to the mind and work of Christ, all in the literature and life of that great race that can be taken up into the soul of the Lord, is taken up, and thereby receives vindication. This is the meaning of the exposition given to the Jewish doctors before his death, and that other made to the bewildered disciples after the resurrection: "Ye search the Scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life: and these are they which bear witness of me;" and "beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself."[1] The final significance of the Old Testament is its unconscious spiritual anticipation of Christ, and Christ is forever the judge of its ethical worth and limit. Whoever, therefore, is armed with the mind of the Master can settle the spiritual question for himself. The historical problem is for the scholar, and a thousand generations of experts cannot hope to give the final solution. Progress will be made toward this goal in every generation, and the advance is marked and exhilarating even now. There is, however, a question concerning

[1] John v. 39; Luke xxiv. 27.

the Bible, both Old Testament and New, which scholarship cannot answer. That question is raised by the ethical need and judgment of mankind, and it can be settled with absolute justice only as the standard ethical and religious mind is fully applied to the entire biblical literature. The man who is full of the mind of Christ is dependent upon no authority to declare to him the portions of his Bible that are truly the revelation of God; he has an unction from the Holy One, and understands for himself.

The criticism of life in its highest earnestness is infinitely harder to bear than that of the intellect. Christian people think of the groups of learned, acute, ambitious, and undevout men in the universities of Germany and Great Britain and America, and they fear for the Bible in their hands. They seldom reflect that such tests are insignificant beside those applied to this book by noble life under the sense of inadequacy for its task. It is said that the drowning man will clutch at a straw, but this he will not do if there is anything more substantial to clutch. The real and terrible test of the Word of God is applied by the sinner who cries out for forgiveness, by the spirit crushed with the consciousness of moral infirmity in the presence of eternal ideals, by the heart under the shadow of a great sorrow, by the soul looking in bewilderment into worlds beyond time. When one sees men going to the Bible

with an awakened conscience, turning its pages in the hope that they may inspire a purpose that will hold in the mortal struggle with temptation, listening for its voices of comfort that they may weep no more, and looking for its light in the thick darkness of death, then one begins to tremble for the fate of the great book. If it can bear the strain of the intensest and noblest life, it can smile at all other tests. The intellectual trial of the Bible, compared with the moral, is as insignificant as the arrows and shells which the Lilliputians shot at Gulliver would be, placed beside the missiles of a modern battle-ship. The great thing about the Bible is, not that it can survive the assaults of hostile criticism, but that it is able to endure the assaults of life. And this it has been able to do because it has carried the minds of men beyond itself. The Bible owes infinitely more to Christ than Christ does to the Bible. Take him out of it, make him no longer accessible through it, and it would become at once no more than a splendid antiquity. It is his presence in it, mystic in the Old Testament, historic in the New, real and divine in both, that has given it all its power; and its endurance of the vast moral trial to which the successive centuries of earnest men have subjected it comes from the Lord. If one retains him in it, and reaches him as the wisdom of God through it, the Bible will continue to sustain the weight of

the whole earnest world. The most terrible critic is not the undevout scholar, but the man who wants standing in the truth and assurance of eternal reality.

The Bible has a literary history. It was produced in certain parts, in certain places, at certain times, and by certain men, and it has come down embodied in many distinct literary forms. Here, again, is the field for pure scholarship; in this region nothing but learning is of any account. It is simple impertinence for one who is not an expert to venture upon an answer to these questions. But the Bible has a spiritual history which should be of immense account with noble men, and which should give the utmost assurance of safety to believers in it as the record of the supreme revelation of God to mankind, while that record is under the tests of free criticism. As to the spiritual vitality of the Scriptures, as to their power of survival, history has a word to speak of no uncertain sound. Time is the great judge. The day, if it is long enough, will reveal what is perishable and what is imperishable. Men and books that have no history are to be considered carefully. The fashion of the world is strong, and it passes away and leaves one with the supposed hero an exposed charlatan, with the imagined literary treasure become a vexation of the spirit. Ben Jonson gives as title to one of his plays "The Devil is an Ass." The proposi-

tion is absolutely true, but it has taken a long time for mankind to arrive at the conclusion, and, judging from strong appearances, a considerable minority have not yet arrived. History is an ethical process, an increasing source of spiritual illumination, and its judgment is precious for individual faith and guidance beyond all estimate. There were many public men in the time of Edmund Burke who were considered his equals, if not greatly his superiors; but a hundred years of thinking have assigned him a position as beyond question the greatest political thinker in Britain of the eighteenth century. In Milton's age there were many poets ranked in popular esteem above him, but two hundred years of reflection have worn the gilt off the common iron of their work, and burnished the gold of his. It has taken Shakespeare many generations to reach his throne. The lion was for a long time concealed from the public eye by the bears and monkeys of the great show that crowded all the conspicuous places. Upon the brow of the peerless dramatic genius of the modern world time has set the crown. And Dante's preëminence, so evident to-day, became indisputable only after the lapse of centuries. He rises from amid the lights of his generation as a star of the first magnitude rises from among the camp-fires on some hillside. For a considerable time, the camp-fire appears greater than the heavenly body; it

seems a compliment almost too great to be bestowed to put both in the same class. But as the evening advances the star ascends; and when the lower lights are out, it is shining in the zenith. These are hints of the service of history in making indisputable the ethical and religious preëminence of the Bible. It has had a vital cosmopolitan trial of two thousand years; it comes attested by time as the spiritual treasure of mankind. It comes laden with the gratitude of the brave, covered with the homage of the seer, and perfumed with the love of the suffering men and women whom it has lifted into peace. It has survived all fashions, and has in its favor the verdict of history. Time has proved it to be the child of the Eternal, the Word of God to our world for all the ages. This is but another way of saying that it is the transcendent judgment of Christ that reveals the real worth of the Bible, and that conserves it for mankind.

The Bible, then, is safe, both in the greater moral trial and in the slighter intellectual, because Christ is in it. Behind the New Testament is his Divine Person, and if, as I believe, the author of the Fourth Gospel is right, behind the Old Testament, back of the life of historic humanity, beyond the dim beginnings of our race upon this planet. Not upon a literature, composed although it is of inimitable biography, wonderful history, inapproachable psalm and

prophecy, rests our belief; not in a record of a divine ministry, made up as it is of priceless evangelical narrative and glowing epistle, stands our faith, but upon the Spirit that produced these, upon the Person who did the works, who brought into existence the facts, and who revealed the eternal moral order of God of which the Testaments, Old and New, are but an incomplete version.[1]

II.

When one comes to the region of theological theory, a high Christology is even of greater importance. The higher criticism is nothing but a grand preliminary. It consists of introduction, and does not profess to raise, much less to settle, a single fundamental question of faith. It professes to be but the true reading, oftener but the approximation to the true reading, of the records that enshrine the ancient revelation. It does not come even within sight of the philosophical problems inhering in the very nature of the

[1] What the higher criticism has done in the way of making possible new approaches to the greater minds of the Old Testament is well illustrated in two familiar books, Dr. Cheyne's "Jeremiah," and Dr. G. A. Smith's "Isaiah." It would be difficult to name a book fuller of insight, sympathy, and constructive imagination than the first; and it would be equally difficult to instance a richer development of the mind of two great prophets than the second. The work that Dr. A. B. Bruce has done for the mind of the New Testament is of a parallel character, and it would have been impossible, but for the achievements of historical criticism.

self-disclosure of God to man. It is a necessary work, and one eminently respectable and laudable, both as regards the talents and accomplishments called for in the critic and the results established; but where the higher criticism ends, true theological thinking begins. A great deal of credit is due to the higher critics, but too much distinction must not be heaped upon them. Some of them have received, for purely preliminary and exceedingly innocent inquiries, honor enough "to sink a navy." There is in progress a movement vastly more important than that which is the special concern of the higher criticism, and that is the total reconstruction of theological theory in fearless logical accord with the truth of the Incarnation.

The coming generation of Christian scholars must be alive to the great questions of religious thought. They must have a theology; they must ascertain what are the realities of the universe. If human history is the only path of approach to these realities, they must ask what are the ultimate meanings of history. They must find what the highest life of the race says of God, — his character, his government of the world, his purpose in man, and his whole relation to mankind. The cry to-day is for work upon the fundamentals, — for answers to the great final questions as to the reality of God, the certainty of his compassionate interest in the human race, and the truth

of the high prophetic consciousness that proclaims itself the revealer of the Divine Mind. It is as builders of the house of the Lord for the believer and worshiper of to-day that the coming generation of Christian ministers must go forth. One need not fear a resurrection of the old, finished theological system. For that there can be no resurrection. The present ideal is not the mediæval castle, but the cathedral. It is ever beautiful for worship, great for service, sublime as a retreat from the tumult of the world, and it is forever unfinished. The staging is never down, for any length of time, from every part of it. Constructions and reconstructions are continually going on; the vast historic edifice is fitted to the needs of the present hour. This is the type for the builder of Christian ideas. He is to rear a temple to match the new light, the new need, the new age; and it is to be forever uncompleted, a symbol of the unfinished work of the Christian intellect, a prophecy of the building that is to come, a growing image of the house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens.

This is the work of the Christian thinker, and his constructive principle is the mind of Christ. Without that guiding truth he can do nothing, but with it he can accomplish all things. The greatest service of the higher criticism is that it forces the believer from the Bible to Christ. The current historical criticism of the Old and New

Testaments, and the dissatisfaction of the religious mind with the theologies of the past, and the multitude of questions working in the serious spirits of the day concerning the whole character of Christianity, are serving, in the good providence of God, to make unmistakable the one central and perpetually creative principle in Christian faith, — the eternal transcendence of Christ. This fact is forced upon one by all proper study of the New Testament, and by all true insight into Christian history. The one heresy which the church should forever dread is the identification of the mind of the Christian centuries with the total mind of Christ. A Christ totally reproducible in the thought of a Paul or a John, or in the entire history of the church on earth, is not the Christ of God. To think of the absolute reproduction of Christ in the life of humanity is to think of putting the ocean into a teacup. The fullness of the Infinite is in him, and when he becomes immanent, by the power of the Holy Spirit, in the life of the world, he will still be the flying-goal of man's love and joyous pursuit, he will still remain the eternal transcendent humanity of God.

It may be well to put this principle of the transcendence of Christ to test in one great example. The Lord's Supper was a commemoration of the death of Christ; it was a form of communion with the living Christ; it was, besides, a

sublime anticipation of the return of Christ. "Till he come!" — these are the words that utter its final and infinite meaning. This expectation of the return of Christ was founded upon the explicit, repeated, and solemn promise of the Master himself. Did he keep his promise to his church? Was the apostolic expectation of his speedy return fulfilled? Here is one of the great test questions of to-day, the test of faith and of insight. For myself I must say that I believe that Christ kept his word to his church, and that the primitive anticipation was realized. How otherwise can one explain the change that passed over the character of the eleven? How can one account for the courage and love and self-denying enthusiasm that now possess them? Can there be a greater proof of the return of Christ than the reconstructed character of his followers? Could any bodily appearance amount to evidence of this kind? Is not the disinterested mind the supreme proof of the presence of the Lord? And there is Pentecost. Is not Peter right in regarding it as the token of Christ's power? In the new religious movement that followed in Samaria, must not one see the Master on a second and greater journey through that outcast province? There is the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. The vision of the Christ coming in the world is the only rational explanation of that momentous transformation of faith and character. There is the

new Christian movement, wide as the bounds of civilization, under this apostle and his fellow-laborers. Here, again, the meaning of the imposing course of events, if it has any, lies wholly in the return of the Lord. Thus, with history as guide, one may affirm, with the deepest assurance, that the Master redeemed his pledge to his disciples, and that the primitive hope was fulfilled.

But the question comes, Was this the sense in which the primitive church believed that Christ would return? The answer is, that it was not. The apostolic expectation was that the Lord would return in the body within the lifetime of the first generation of believers. This was the universal form of the faith. The form was wrong; the faith itself was profoundly right. What is the meaning of this admission? That the apostolic disappointment was a divine surprise, that Christianity proved itself vaster and more spiritual than even Paul could comprehend, that Christ was other and infinitely more than the total apostolic mind that set him before the world. At the first, Jesus was misunderstood by his disciples; later he was misrepresented by his countrymen, and through his entire ministry he was ever the uncomprehended. Even in the happier epoch in the life of the apostles that followed the resurrection and ascension, he remained other and infinitely greater than their thought of him. Stephen's speech brought new light; Peter's

experience with Cornelius was a personal illumination; Paul's profound insight wrought great and beneficent changes in the primitive apprehension of Christ; and John's brooding spirit added richness and range to the final apostolic conception of the Lord. But what was true at the first, is true at the last. The Christ in the mind of the New Testament writers is not the total Christ of God. If the Lord is what the church has from the beginning believed him to be, the Eternal in time, it is simply inconceivable that either gospel, or epistle, or Christian history, or all together, should be an adequate reproduction of him. There can never be an adequate reproduction. The greatness of Christ must be the surprise of the centuries; the last hours of time must have for their romance the fresh unveilings of his majesty; and the perpetual delight of the everlasting future must be the ever grander discovery of his significance. When the Master becomes immanent in our whole humanity up to the limit of its growing capacity, the residue of his being will still be infinite. This is the idea indispensable to the Christian thinker of to-day. With the conviction in his heart of the eternal transcendence of Christ, he will be free as an interpreter of the New Testament; he will be prepared for inadequacy even in the teachings of a Paul or a John; he will feel that he must become a critic as well as a disciple of Christian

history; and he will look to the future with richest anticipations, since the courses of time, like the rivers that flow into the sea, can only add to the church's sense of the infiniteness of the Lord. The insight obtained into the Person of Christ, through the apostolic conception of the second advent, yields this great principle. The apostolic failure was the apostolic beatitude. It was the clear assertion that their Master was infinitely more and better than their highest thought. Their failure casts no suspicion upon their inspiration; it simply makes it evident that they were finite beings dealing with the Infinite.

This principle holds, of course, over the entire field of belief, and through the whole course of time. The apostles were right and wrong at the same time in their faith about the return of their King. The faith itself was right; the form was mistaken. The Christian centuries have been in converse with the eternal Humanity of God. That is the thread of gold on which the souls of believers are strung. That is the ground of identity between the earliest generation of disciples and the latest. There has been a positive apprehension, an indubitable grasp, of the one Infinite Christ; but the modes in which he has been conceived, the forms through which he has been known, have ever been inadequate. The revision of theological opinion has been constant; the process must go on while the Lord the Spirit con-

tinues to come in the life of humanity. A theology approximately and provisionally adequate is all that one can hope for, — is indeed all that one can wish. As the increase in wealth calls for a larger treasury, so the accumulation of Christ in the consciousness of mankind demands more intellectual room. The Lord is at hand, and as he comes he changes all things; that is the everlasting glory of the Christian faith. And no believer can have the courage to be as radical as the times require who is without this conviction of the transcendence of his Master. Only the man who holds the unreproducible Christ will search the evangelical record as it should be searched, with utter devoutness and absolute freedom; only he will compare the total apostolic mind as it appears in the epistles, as the comparison should be made, in the veneration of love and in the integrity of the historical spirit; only he can traverse aright the vast field of Christian dogma, with homage for the reality of the faith of all the centuries, and with fearless criticism of its various forms; and only he will rejoice to anticipate the revisions to which his own opinions shall be subjected in the future fuller illumination from the Lord. Thus far, in modern times, the truth of the Incarnation has been used only in a negative way, to kill certain forms of belief repugnant to Christian feeling. The employment of it, as the positive constructive force in all

valid Christian thought, has been felt as a necessity only in recent times, and it is not difficult to see some of the immediate changes for the better which must result from this method of theological speculation.

The truth of the Incarnation, the reality of the introduction of the mind of God into the world in the consciousness of Jesus, is the creative source of all theology. And yet, strange to say, the Incarnation, the consciousness of Christ, has never been made to yield fully and logically its doctrine of God. What one must regret in reading the history of theological opinion is the absence of a truly Christian conception of God. In the highest devotional or confessional literature the absoluteness of God is indeed always present. When a noble soul has an offering to make, a tribute to give to the Infinite, the object of adoration and trust must stand in the vision as perfect. Only toward eternal excellence can the intelligent human spirit let out its entire capacity of veneration and love and life. One cannot behold what Augustine beholds in his Confessions and not join him in utter homage; and one cannot see what he sees in his strictly theological writings without an irrepressible protest against the character of his God. Man's consciousness is at its highest in prayer, in adoration, in absolute moral trust, and out of that should be elaborated, in dependence upon a consciousness im-

measurably higher, his doctrine of the Supreme Being. Leonidas, the father of Origen, — so the beautiful story runs, — delighted with his son's eagerness and aptitude in sacred studies when but a child, used to uncover, not his brow, but his breast, as he lay asleep, and kiss it as already a dwelling-place of the Holy Spirit.[1] Here is the symbol for the universal conviction of all great Christian thinkers. "The heart makes the theologian;" that is, the moral consciousness at its highest is the source of the material out of which the speculative faculty is to rear its edifice. And the criticism must be made upon all the theologians, from Augustine to the present day, who have acknowledged him as their master, that the Christian experience in which the true theological interest originates, the Christian consciousness that is the source of all valid thinking upon the ultimate realities of the universe, has had but an incidental influence upon the character of belief. There can be no doubt that Augustine and Anselm and Luther, and even Calvin, all began with the profoundest and sincerest acknowledgment of the absolute moral perfection of God. Our own Edwards is perhaps the most conspicuous example of this moral origin of theology. His soul was kindled into the purest and most passionate love through the vision of the infinite and awful beauty of his Maker, and under the shaping and

[1] Religious Thought in the West, p. 206, Bishop Westcott.

consoling sovereignty of this sublime thought he lived his wonderful life. And yet, in the evolution of theological opinion, these thinkers, who began with the open vision of the Highest, defer hardly at all to the creative Christian consciousness. This is their common colossal defect; they make but incidental use of the consciousness of Christ in the determinations of theological opinion.

They are not wholly without excuse. However willing the nobler members of the great group might have been to elaborate a better theology, the impulse seemed under hopeless condemnation. Exegesis was held to be against it, the facts of life, and the common notion, that had all the force of a first principle, that the redemptive scheme was wholly confined to this world. With all the books of the Bible as of practically equal authority, texts might be quoted almost without number against a nobler theology; and with the assumption that the day of grace was limited to this world, the awful facts of human history were simply incompatible with an optimistic creed. Any one who has ever moved within the narrow circle of traditional orthodoxy will recall the hopeless puzzle that the world presented, — will remember how impossible it was to allow an important influence to the nobler influences of the Christian heart, or even seriously to entertain them. The heart was deceitful above all things

and desperately wicked; and, besides, a thousand texts could be marshaled, and the whole dark side of human history, including all the murderers from Cain downwards, and all the traitors from Judas Iscariot, and against these witnesses feeling must be silenced.

The generations are now emerging from this millennium of sore bondage; they are coming from under the vast shadow that has been so heavy upon the heart of man into the light of the cross. The creative principle of theology is now recognized as lying in these words: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."[1] Too long the character of the Father has been at a disadvantage as compared with that of Christ. Here truly we are indebted to Unitarianism. The wonderful grasp upon the principle, the reality of the Divine Fatherhood that appears in the works of Maurice, which have silently revolutionized the theology of all parties in the Anglican church, he obtained from the Unitarians.[2] This truth is now seen to be fundamental; and the high source of it is the consciousness of Christ. It is when this Supreme Consciousness in time is pressed that there is obtained the final characterization of the Supreme Consciousness above time; and all texts of Scripture and facts of human history that seem to rise in contradiction of the absolute goodness

[1] John xiv. 9.

[2] Kingdom of Christ, vol. i. p. 135.

of God must be considered with the mood of true science, but with entire emancipation from old notions and fears. The crying need to-day is for a theology, a working philosophy of life, accordant with the deliverance concerning God made by the consciousness of Christ. There are still many difficulties in the way; but it is believed that they are no longer insuperable. At all events, believers are here face to face with the dread alternative. Outside the conventional and comfortable circles of belief, the great strain comes at this point. The question is not whether Christ is good enough to represent the Supreme Being, but whether the Supreme Being is good enough to have Christ for his representative. John Stuart Mill looks upon the Christian religion as the worship of Christ rather than the worship of God, and in this way he explains the beneficence of its influence.[1] The mood is still prevalent among those who view nature as Mill did, who perpetuate his warm humanity, and who share his solicitude over the highest interests of mankind. We must either abandon our Christianity as the revelation of the Infinite, renounce it as the message of the Eternal, cease to regard it as in any sense a valid and trustworthy characterization of the Ultimate Reality, or we must go on to the construction of

[1] "For it is Christ, rather than God, whom Christianity has held up to believers as the pattern of perfection for humanity." Essays on Religion, p. 253.

individual existence and social life, human history and the universe, by means of its highest principle, — the consciousness of Christ. Those who are not ready to admit that Christ and the nature of things are in final and fatal contradiction, who are not willing to follow the men who would make our religion, with its divine vision and exhaustless ethical power, only a temporary human entertainment within the circles of an iron and brutal necessity, a sublime illusion of beings under the irrevocable sentence of death, a mere interlude between the spasm in which all high life originates and that in which it is annihilated, must make a new use of the principle by which they are able to resist a skepticism so absolute. The science that has been in the ascendant for the last fifty years has been setting at variance the creed of Christianity and the nature of things. The most influential of these scientific leaders, having obtained their ethical standards from Christ, and having found them at war with the courses of nature, have closed their debate with the affirmation that the highest ethics have no basis in extra-human reality, — have in fact nothing to look for from the Infinite but endless hostility. This deduction of the ethical scientist should be significant for the Christian theologian. It should lead him to raise the question whether his religion is but a magnificent subjective dream, a wonderful anæsthetic for one

who must pass under the knife of reality, the fine art by which life otherwise in agony beats itself into the eternal sleep, or the revelation of the meaning of history, the disclosure of the character of God. It should lead him to reflect that perhaps, if he had made a better use of the great constructive principle of Christian faith, if he had pressed from the consciousness of Christ God's plan for mankind, he might have carried over the whole expanse of human interests an illumination so great that these conclusions of the ethical scientist would have been impossible. As the case stands, theology is as vast and as lurid a denial of the objective worth of the mind of the Master as the extremest form of modern scientific speculation. Take any one of the great systems, from that of Augustine to that of the latest champion of New England theology, and compare it, thought for thought, position for position, with the consciousness of Christ, and it will appear that if the one is true the other cannot be. The result has been that in traditional orthodoxy, the highest in Christianity, the absoluteness of the Divine Love has always been under the suspicion of unreality, while the terrible theology has seemed the true version of the ultimate fact. This is not said in any feeling of disrespect for the great leaders, to whom society at large is under the deepest obligations. It is said that the sufferings of our fathers may not have been in vain,

that their vital fight with the Ephesian beasts may not prove without profit to their descendants, and that the progress which has been the inspiration of all the Christian centuries may acquire a new momentum, or, realizing the eternal obstruction in its path, may vex itself no longer with foolish hopes.

The consciousness of Christ as the authentic revelation of the character of the Infinite is the great beginning of theology. The present imperative call is for the fearless logical use of this fundamental idea. Whatever revisions it may require in Old Testament teaching, or if need be in apostolic deduction; above all, whatever surrenders are necessary in the traditional theology, — should be cheerfully made . The supremacy of Christ is at stake, and nothing must be allowed to stand in the way of that. Nothing short of a scheme that holds God for humanity can answer to the present and logical call. Out of our creative principle, if it is to be accepted as trustworthy, must come a new working philosophy. The world is larger than once it was; history is much longer; the enterprise of Christianity is immeasurably greater, and the vital necessities of the case demand a vaster interpretation. The philosophy of Christianity, born amid the wreck of the Roman Empire, renewed in the grand contest with the corrupt church of the Middle Ages, and that seemed adequate to the narrow world of the

Puritan, is to-day totally inadequate in view of the magnitude of the Christian task. The sense of history, and the conviction that Christianity has a cosmopolitan mission, are bound to work out a new theology, in which the new shall be that which was true from the beginning.

In a general way, it is easy enough to say what the ruling philosophy of human life must be, where the consciousness of Christ is accepted as the measure of the truth. There are but two contrasted constructions of the fundamental relation of mankind to the Infinite. The Augustinian, the Calvinistic, the Edwardean, has occupied the field for fifteen centuries. It is, amid all its variations, a partialistic scheme. In it God sincerely contemplates only the selection of a number; the gospel is not a gospel for mankind; the call of the Spirit is not to the race; God's intention includes only a remnant. This is the metaphysics of Latin Christianity from first to last; its grim logic, avowed or unavowed; its horrible finality for the world. A restricted elective decree; a conception of human nature in total dissociation from the Divine, until reclaimed by the new creative act of regeneration; a limited atonement; irresistible grace for those to whom it is given, and their perseverance unto salvation, — these ideas form a coherent scheme. Out of the choice of the Eternal, restricted to a certain number, follow in logical sequence the various posi-

tions of this partialistic interpretation of man's relation to God. The feeling toward Calvin, that so many men of wide acquaintance with ecclesiastical history deplore, mainly it would seem on the principle of the poet, —

> "Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
> As to be hated, needs but to be seen;
> Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
> We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

— is, after all, sound and infinitely significant. For John Calvin has given the most logical and aggressive exposition to the scheme that contemplates the salvation only of a part of mankind. Modifications of this philosophy of the relation of our race to God can never mean much. So long as it stands, God is against humanity. The modified Calvinist will admit at once that salvation is always by the will of God; and he must likewise admit that perdition is by the same power. Such is the final philosophical horror that the disciple of John Calvin, however modified, is compelled to face. This is the ultimate blasphemy of thought in which our Western civilization has been, for the most part, living these fifteen hundred years. This is the house of faith divided against itself in which men of God have been dwelling, — the fundamental eternal dualism that has become a Niagara current to atheism for the serious, and a monumental excuse for excess for the foolish. This is the great competitor for

continued empire over the thoughts of Christian men and women; and it is the acceptance or rejection of this entire scheme with which believers in Christ are confronted. Modifications are a mean disguise of the issue; they have become an abomination. One will answer the call of the human reason and conscience by them as soon but no sooner than one can, to borrow the words of another, "stop the leak in a frigate with a porous plaster." One of the two contrasted and competing constructions of the ultimate relation of mankind to the Infinite is the partialistic scheme. Under that philosophy men must live, ministers must preach, and the church must do her work, or under its absolute opposite. The tumult of the time has a fundamental philosophical meaning. The agitation is not simply over the higher criticism: it has its deepest source in the suspicions as to what that movement, destructive of the letter of Scripture, may come. The extreme conservatives apprehend a theological revolution; they are appalled at the prospect of a philosophy of Christianity that shall be radically at war with that which they believe to be the truth. Their suspicion is well founded. The issue to-day is between the faith that holds God for the remnant and that which sees in him the hope of mankind. It is not primarily, or even necessarily, a difference in eschatology; for eschatology concerns only the distant end of the

stream of finite being. The question goes to the fountain-head of life and faith: it asks for a statement of the relation of God to our race; it receives two answers, and one of these is the historic declaration that the Eternal is for a portion of mankind and against the rest.

Now, in the case of one who believes that the consciousness of Christ is the creative and regulative source of all theology, this partialistic scheme must be forever abandoned. For such a believer, the universe must be held to be on the side of humanity, the whole sweep of the Divine purpose must be conceived as favorable to mankind. If the decree of the Infinite is to be inferred from Christ, it must be an inclusive decree. Some will be first and some last, one will be elected to lead and another to follow; but all will be chosen for service, all for the beatific vision. That many passages may be quoted from the Old Testament against this inclusive election need trouble no one; for one has only to remember that the deepest of all Israel's sins was her failure to understand the Divine election. That, too, is the limitation to her highest prophetic thought, although here and there it is transcended. Many texts may be adduced from the New Testament against the idea of a Divine choice inclusive of humanity, but these isolated passages must be read in the light of the great declaration of John: "And this is the message

which we have heard from him, and announce unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."[1] If Christ's mind is authoritative and final, if his mission is to the world, if Christianity is the absolute religion, the purpose of God must include humanity. This, then, is the first great conception that the consciousness of Christ yields. God is for humanity, the Creator is on the side of his creature.

From this high conviction that the Infinite has a purpose of love and mercy for the entire race, a new conception of the sphere of the Holy Spirit must result. Narrow views here bring the various utterances of the New Testament into hopeless contradiction. If the Holy Spirit was not given, in any measure, until after the ascension of Jesus, what shall be said of the affirmation, "For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost"?[2] The promise of the Holy Spirit to the apostles and to the church is not of something absolutely new; it is of a new and final form of the Eternal Presence with mankind. The career of Christ — his teaching, ministry, character, passion, death, resurrection, and ascension — is the final, absolute form of the coming of the Holy Spirit; and in that sense the gift was new. But in another sense the Holy Spirit has always been in the world since man became man.

[1] 1 John i. 5. [1] 2 Peter i. 21.

The imperishable element in the Old Testament, according to all Christian belief, is the product of the Holy Spirit. The Hebrew Bible, in so far as it contains permanent interest for the human soul, and permanent power over human society, is the unimpeachable witness that the Spirit of God was with men before the advent of Christ. If in the Hebrew civilization, why not in the Persian, Assyrian, Egyptian, and Indian? If the sacred books of these various peoples are witnesses to the fact that God has been from the beginning speaking to them, why should Christians hesitate to believe it? The advent into the growing circle of scholarship of the religions of the world; the sympathetic study of these moving and amazing symbols of the aspiration of the ancient world; the discovery, in cruder forms, of many of the thoughts and hopes and venerations that enter into the highest modern faith; and the reverent reading of these early chapters in the Book of Life, — lead naturally and inevitably to the conviction that the age of the Holy Spirit is the age of man, and that the sphere of his operation is our entire humanity. This great modern study of the religions of the world is bound to result in the belief that the Eternal has always been searching the hearts of men. Then, too, the whole altruistic side of human life is a witness to the same fact. Against pure sensuousness, and against mere success as a food-getter as constitut-

ing the chief good of man, there has been a protest from the beginning. Ideals of courage and friendship and love have been guiding our race from time immemorial. A body of morality has grown, among every people, proclaiming other things than material success to be essential to human life. He reads the records of the world's history with blind eyes who does not find there the consciousness, however dim and crude, that man cannot live by bread alone. The amount of altruistic capacity required to run the domestic and civic economies of primitive man is by no means inconsiderable; the fund of courage and friendship by which the ancient world was kept going is amazing; and the overwhelming testimony to the presence of God with men to-day is not that supplied by the churches. One becomes aware of it when one asks, What keeps humanity alive? What is the source of the brotherhood that is growing the world over, and that, too, in the presence of a thousand inducements to anarchy and brutality? Why is it that the maxim of the murderer, Am I my brother's keeper? is being repudiated everywhere, and with a deepening abhorrence? What keeps the race in even its present supply of altruistic feeling? To keep our modern world running; to retain even the civilization that we have; to insure the permanence of domestic, social, and civic bonds; to hold the race from dispersion, and in the power of

its true humanity; to enable it to carry forward the vast enterprise of life, — the fund of unselfishness and of positive conserving love absolutely indispensable is something amazing. Crime and vice and meanness and inhumanity are inconsistent with the business of living; they are contradictions of the great human movement, and they are the exceptions. The race is not to be judged from its criminal and vicious classes, nor from its Pharisees. These are the extreme perversions of its purpose, the notorious and exceptional enemies of its onward march. The race has a work of justice and mercy and humanity on its hands, and, poorly as the work is done, the performance, such as it is, demonstrates a race alive with God. The idealizations of love and patriotism; the venerations of the sympathies and pieties that one finds in the songs of Burns, that interpret the human heart the world over, and that are absolutely essential even to such social and domestic and civic life as mankind possess, — are an impressive attestation of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The saints are, indeed, the crown of our humanity; but if, outside the saints, beyond the churches, in the swarming populations of the extra-Christian world, the Divine Life is wholly absent, despair is the only rational mood. It is a source of vast annoyance to find in that magnificent roll-call of faith, the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, the names of Rahab and Samson. It

seems an insult to faith to suppose that Rahab could do anything that needed the inspiration of the Spirit of God, or that Samson in the performance of his feats stood in any relation of dependence to the Divine. But this is simple fastidiousness and utter superficiality. The publicans and the harlots are candidates for the Kingdom of God, because the necessities of their humanity, and the work that they have never wholly abandoned, keep them open to the Eternal. Man as a spiritual being is constituted by the Holy Spirit; his nature as man implies the constant presence of the Divine, and the total lapse of man from God would be the fall into brutehood. In the unity of the Spirit, — here is the great criterion. Unity is the supreme witness for the presence of the Divine. In himself man is a conscious personal unity; he rises above the flow of sensations, and builds them into the temple of knowledge; he transcends the impulses that make him the foe of his kind, and constructs an idea of good that puts him in fellowship with his kind; and out of this fellowship come the institutions that mark mankind, — the communion of the home, the business coöperation, the combinations for the ends of science, and art and philosophy, the federation of communities into nations, and the gathering of the nations in the church of Christ, into the consciousness of humanity. The entire stupendous movement is the overwhelming wit-

ness to the fact of the universal diffusion of the Holy Spirit flowing from the inclusive elective decree.

From this conviction of the universal gift of the Divine Spirit, it follows that revelation is a fact coextensive with mankind. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork to all peoples; and the law of the Lord, written upon the heart, interpreted through the inspirations of genius and embodied in decalogue and prophecy and psalm, likewise is a universal revelation. The ultimate significance of all knowledge concerns the Infinite; and all true knowledge, therefore, must be revelation. If man cannot live by bread alone, if he requires the Word of God, that Word must have been present with him, as the provision for his spirit, from the beginning; and when the Word became flesh and tabernacled among men, it was but the grand consummation of the historic process of revelation. From the universality of revelation, the meaning of regeneration becomes plain. It must mean the victorious assertion, through the power of the Holy Spirit, of the aboriginal moral endowment of man. A high ethical doctrine can alone make the profound meaning of this belief intelligible. The best introduction to the study of it is a course in the ethics of Plato, Epictetus, Butler, and Kant. There is a non-sensuous, a non-animal, a rational and divine side to human

life. The fundamental trouble with man is that he is not consistent with himself; he is not living in accord with the plan of his being. He has fallen from a sublime moral unity into a miserable dualism; and his problem is the victorious assertion of the aboriginal spiritual principle. Regeneration is not a new creation in the sense of a new endowment: it is the reënthronement of the moral ideal, invested with the meaning of Christ's life, and clothed with the authority of the Holy Spirit. And the atonement, if it is to remain a vital part in the working philosophy of a living church, must be gathered from the mind of Christ, and construed through the enlightened Christian conscience. Grounds of agreement between God and man, since God is a Spirit and man is made in his image, must be transactions in the Spirit. The sacrifice of Christ has its meaning here; it is through the Eternal Spirit.[1]

From the inclusive Divine decree there follow these positions of faith that have just been named concerning the gift of the Holy Spirit, the extent of revelation, the meaning of the new birth, and the method of approach to the significance of the atonement. But one of the greatest changes of belief, following from the universal Divine vocation of mankind, concerns the meaning of history. If the mind of Christ is to be trusted as

[1] Hebrews ix. 14.

the true revelation of the purpose of the Infinite, history can be but another name for the redemptive process. And history means something immeasurably greater than it did even fifty years ago. The scientific computations respecting the length of time that man has been upon this planet may amount to no more than guesses, but the facts upon which they are based have abolished the traditional guess of six thousand years. We must extend the time perhaps to fifty or even a hundred thousand years. We have to reckon with the stupendous problem that history thus extended presents to Christian faith. The only possible solution is that which sees in the evolutionary process the redemptive movement of God. If one believes in a Christian God, one must find a Christian interpretation of human history. It is impossible, without self-stultification, to consider the question of salvation only from the modern point of view, or to rest content when the process is followed back into the civilization of Israel. We have a pre-Hebrew, a prehistoric world of unimaginable extent and impressiveness to confront, a world beside whose populations the inhabitants of the entire historic period are but as a drop to the ocean. It is incapacity or unwillingness to face this immemorial past, with its countless multitudes of suffering men and women, that is tempting Christian thinkers to revive the old doctrine of a restricted election under the

scientific formula of the survival of the fittest, and to add to it the new paganism of conditional immortality. The past is too great and too brutal to bring within the compass of the redemptive movement as traditionally conceived; and the simplest way out of the difficulty, according to the logic of certain writers, is to suffocate these multitudinous swarms of prehistoric humanity, taking good care to preserve for our own pious uses whatever honey they may have hived, in the way of laborious invention, noble custom, sacred institution, and sweet conquest over the wild forces of nature. In return for the immeasurable benefits which we have inherited from the prehistoric world, we are asked to exclude them from the elective decree, and to add to that the new dogma of conditional immortality. If this is not a near approach to cannibalism, one would like to know what is! The courage and the capacity to face this new problem that history sets before the church to-day are necessities of the life of Christian faith. And, as has already been said, there can be but one solution. The redemptive process must include the whole historic movement. Time, with its entire content of humanity, must be the subject of that process of salvation whose consummate expression is the cross of Christ, and whose origin is in the Eternal Fatherhood.

There are two serious questions raised by this view which keep many persons from embracing

it, and which must now be noticed. The first comes when one considers the low moral average of human life, especially in the heathen world of to-day, and under the ancient civilizations. When one thinks of the swarming populations of mankind, of the masses that live almost wholly outside the religious sphere, of the crowds that cannot be said to lead even a conventionally moral existence, of the mighty populations that are still in the swamps of animalism, and who, judged by an ideal ethical standard, have little or no worth for one another, it is difficult to regard their history as a redemptive process; it is hard to cover them with the purpose of the Eternal. Relief comes when one remembers that humanity has its value chiefly for God. It touches his compassion; it appeals to his wisdom; it calls out his Fatherhood; it moves him to undertake for it; it becomes in its helplessness one vast mode of realizing, in an historic process, the love and the pity of the Infinite. The several thousands of infants in any large city have no immediate value for one another. If they were brought together into some great room, one would give to another no sympathy, no help. The chief immediate value of these infants is to their parents, their friends, the older generation, and the human heart of the city where they live. They cry out for help, they develop sympathy, they move pity, they elicit a great body of tender love, they give

realization to man's fondest dreams, and convert into character, through a vital process, some of the richest and deepest forces in the soul. It is no slight, therefore, upon these helpless lives, to say that they are of value chiefly for humanity; and it is no libel upon humanity to affirm that it has worth mainly for God. The hosts of toilers and sufferers, fighting for existence amid the hardest conditions, caring nothing for science or literature or philosophy, and having little time even for religion, cannot be said to possess any clear, developed, deliberately wrought out, established moral character. Such morality as they have is largely instinctive; and ethical worth is not the conspicuous merit of mankind either in prehistoric times or in the best historic periods. The differentiating mark of human life is that it concerns the Infinite. No man lives unto himself, and no man dies unto himself; that is, every man lives and dies unto the Lord. Man's supreme relationship is to the Eternal, his final accountability is to God, the ultimate significance of his entire existence reaches to the Divine conscience. And therefore a man's wrong-doing can never be mere brutality. His lie, his lust, his cruelty and sordidness, cannot be a mere repetition of the cunning, the foulness, the fierceness, and the dull indifference to truth and beauty and moral ideals that one finds in the brute. Man's wrong-doing is never simple brutality; neither is it mere

crime, something done against the law of the state; nor is it only vice, something done in contempt of the social sentiments of the community. It may be brutal, vicious, criminal; but it is infinitely more. It is sin; it is done against God. So, too, man's error is not the mistake of an animal; it is the wandering of a child of God. Human thoughts are the concern of the Absolute Mind, as human acts are the concern of the Absolute Conscience. It follows that man's sufferings are not merely so much pain endured by creatures of flesh and blood, confined in its meaning to this poor world, in whose markets the agony and bloody sweat of souls has not even a quotable value. The American nation never could have passed through the great slavery agitation, never could have gone through the war with its terrible drain upon sympathy, treasure, and blood, if there had not been lodged in the national heart the conviction that the whole tragic movement concerned the Almighty. That conviction gave dignity to its error, momentousness to disloyalty, solemnity to the national purpose, and an infinite sanctity to the sacrifice through which the country was redeemed. Another great consequence of the belief that man has value chiefly for God is human as opposed to restricted immortality. Why is it that the oceans that lie so loosely upon the unprotected outside of the planet do not leave it and pour in wild floods through space? Be-

cause they lie so close to its heart, and move within the sphere of its motion; because they are fastened to their places, and made an everlasting part of the earth through its ceaseless revolutions. The planet must stop, or break into fragments, before these oceans can be displaced or lose their life. And in the same way humanity stands within the compass of God's thought, lies within the circuit of his love, dwells in the very movement of his spiritual power, and is thus forever swept onward in his companionship. Constitutional sonship to God is the basis of human immortality; when this becomes moral sonship, assurance becomes much greater. But moral sonship, that is, actual sympathy with God's purpose on man's part, is available only for the merest handful of souls. If that doctrine is true, humanity goes to wreck, and only a few leading spirits, the captain and officers of the stupendous sunken craft, are saved. In view of the length and fullness of human history, in the presence of the consciousness of Christ as revealing the character of God, such an opinion is simply incredible. It is conceived in utter isolation from the problem, and born in the wilderness of despair. It is a sufficient answer to those who fail to cover humanity with the Eternal purpose, and who refuse to regard history as the process of redemption because of the low moral average of human character, and of the sins and crimes that have

flooded the courses of time, to say that mankind from its worst to its best, apart from the Divine Man, has worth chiefly for God. The worst person in all history is something to God, if he is nothing to the world.

The second question is more serious still. If one shall regard history as but another name for the redemptive process, and if one shall set that process utterly free from the limits of space and time, must not moral disaster result from a plan of salvation so latitudinarian? It is believed widely that restrictions upon the sinner's opportunity are necessary to bring him to his senses, and that to assure him of an unlimited opportunity is a sop to the traitor within him. Now I believe that the principle of salvation, or admission into the kingdom, can take care of itself; that no breadth or narrowness of theological thought can touch it; and that it is absolutely independent and self-sufficient.

The principle of salvation gains nothing from a narrow theology. One may speak of the uncertainty of life, affirm the momentousness of the change of death, declare that there is no evidence that any soul ever passed from evil to good on the other side of the grave, draw in the blackest forms the retributions of the future, pile up the lurid metaphors until those who listen feel as if they were on a journey with Dante through his Inferno, and one will not have added, in the

slightest degree, to the weight and solemnity of the bare salvation principle. Salvation remains utterly, sternly, eternally ethical, and more than that one cannot say. It is as exhibitions of the ethical nature of the blessed life that the grand retributive metaphors of Christ have a meaning so awful. The worm that never dies, the fire that is unquenched, the utter darkness full of weeping and gnashing of teeth, all tell of one thing, — the horror of unrighteousness, the woe of a state which is the negation of love, the torment of a mood which is the affirmation of falsehood and iniquity. One cannot make the globe weigh any more than it does weigh. One might carry the Alps to India, and the Himalaya to Switzerland; thereby one will alter the proportions of Europe and Asia, but one will add nothing to the mass of the world. One may call imagination into the service and pack into this old earth a hundred other planets. The work of imagination may be sublime; but when genius has thus exhausted its strength, the world will weigh no more and no less than when the mighty effort began. Christ's salvation no man can add to. There is but one salvation, and that is righteousness. No man can get it in any world without an agony and a bloody sweat, and whoever is outside the moral movement into the likeness of God in Christ, in this world and in all other worlds, is outside salvation. That man is in hell.

But if the sublime and self-sufficient principle of salvation cannot possibly gain anything from a narrow theology, it may lose much in popular thought. Its great issue may be obscured. When Lincoln said that this nation could not remain half slave and half free, that it must become a country with slavery everywhere or nowhere, he defined the issue for the whole people. The great debater refused to go afield into the ten thousand subtleties and sophistries of the slaveholders' position. He simply presented the radical, unalterable issue. If he had piled round it party politics, hung it with the drapery of the wildest stump oratory, and mixed it with a questionable political creed, he would have done inexpressible harm to his great cause. He would have obscured the issue. And this is done whenever a mediæval theology is invoked to strengthen the motive to repentance and faith in Christ. One thing only can be accomplished in that way: the grand issue can be confused. Salvation will sink in the popular mind into a bargain with God through assent to certain propositions, into a contract with him through physical fear, into a partnership such as prudent men may think it well to establish. Salvation will become a sort of insurance policy, the premium to be paid in church-going, the benefit to be immunity from the evil consequences of an intenser and more unscrupulous materialism than even men of the

world dare attempt. But if the issue be defined as Christ defined it, as simply and eternally a question of righteousness, no soul can mistake it.

On the other hand, it must be said that nothing can be taken away, by a broader theology, from the relentlessness of the moral process of salvation. The Christian thinker of to-day has won his freedom to regard God as the Father of all men, to conceive of him as eternally interested in the whole race; and to remove all limits of place and time from the redemptive scheme of Christ. He has the right to affirm, if he solemnly believes it, that, on this side of death or on that, God and Christ and the moral universe are unchangeably the same; that all the Divine punishments are chastisements; that God's final purpose in scourging his children is to bring them back to himself; and that even in hell the worm must gnaw and the fire burn in the service of the Eternal Grace.

But all this breadth of belief does not and cannot change the unalterable nature of salvation. The words of Moses to Pharaoh are in point here: "As soon as I am gone out of the city, I will spread abroad my hands unto the Lord; the thunders shall cease, neither shall there be any more hail; that thou mayest know that the earth is the Lord's. But as for thee and thy servants, I know that ye will not yet fear the Lord God." [1]

[1] Exodus ix. 29, 30.

A merciful God did not mean a converted king; a changed divinity left a self-identical oppressor. One may change one's conception of the Supreme Being from Moloch to our Father in heaven, from the destroyer to the Saviour of mankind; but until one shall agonize in the conflict with passion, and through heroic suffering put on the form of righteousness, there can be no improvement. The thunders and hail of one theology may give place to the sweetness and light of another; but if the oppressor still remain the oppressor, the sinner the sinner, there is no gain. The moral order of the world is an ultimate fact. The law of entrance into the kingdom is the law of struggle, and it is a final necessity for every man. Below everything are manhood and womanhood. What is the character of human purpose and endeavor judged by the career of Christ? That is the ultimate question. The great conservative principle of Christian theology is the righteousness without which no man can see the Lord. To call one a Christian who is without righteousness, or the reasonable hope of it, can do one no good; he is outside the kingdom. On the other hand, to affirm that the opportunity to become righteous is eternal can do no harm if the thing itself be defined as the possession, through an eonian woe, of the mind, the heart, the character of Christ. When the grand issue is defined as the possession of the righteousness of Christ, the interests of

morality, and the motives toward the strenuous life, are safe.

Thus the consciousness of Christ as the creative principle in theology yields a God for humanity. It covers the entire race with the purpose of the Infinite; it interprets the moral idealism that is inseparable from mankind into the universal presence of the Holy Spirit; it finds among all peoples traces of that revelation of God which becomes absolute in Christ; it looks upon history as but another name for the redemptive process; and it removes from this process all limits of place and time, because it sees that salvation is a principle utterly independent. Here the creative principle is joined by the conservative. This is a righteous universe, God is a righteous God, and there is no salvation to any soul, in any world, without participation in the righteousness of God in Christ. All that is great in the progressive movement, and all that is essential in conservative belief, need but to be put under the supremacy of Christ to insure their fruitfulness and permanence in human thought and character. No theology can be great enough that is not derived from the consciousness of the Lord, and no interest of mankind is unsafe if it is in his keeping.[1]

[1] "Where was the refuge from the miserable alternative (of Greek pantheism or Hebrew transcendence) for them? Where is it for us?

"I believe, my brethren, only in the recognition of a Filial

III.

Individualism and socialism are but parts of the truth taken for the whole. Neither is altogether false; neither is entirely true. Each, when pushed to its extreme logical expression, is the destruction of the grand reality of human belief and life. Pure individualism makes the reality of the universe impossible. According to it there can be no unity in which all things are centred, no common fountain of being from which all particular life flows. The metaphysics of individualism is atomism; its psychology is naked sensationalism, psychic life minus the soul, the impressions and ideas of Hume going through their customary and inexplicable evolutions; its ethics, unmitigated self-seeking. Absolute individualism is the contradiction of all being, all knowledge, and all reality. Of this form of opinion, whether as a doctrine of the universe or of man's life, Christianity is the eternal antagonist. This fact is likely to be obscured by the

Word, one with that Father who is above all, speaking through all things; in the world, as St. John says, which was made by Him though the world knew Him not; actually God and yet with God. Thus is the dream of Greek pantheism substantiated; thus is it reconciled with the sternest Hebrew faith in God as absolute and as distinct from all his creatures; thus are we saved from the heartlessness of an all-excluding theology, and from the equal heartlessness of an all-comprehending philosophy." F. D. Maurice, Sermons, vol. vi. p. 104.

wide and favorable reception accorded to Benjamin Kidd's "Social Evolution." The vitiating defect of that vigorous book is its individualism. The radical contradiction of the work lies in its moral socialism superimposed upon extreme philosophic egoism. Professor Drummond has contested Mr. Kidd's interpretation of nature, and most readers will think that he has done so in the interest of truth. Nature is not the realm of wild and unmitigated egoism that Mr. Kidd seems to believe it to be. Parentalism is in nature, and that is but another name for altruism. The struggle for life is not everything; there is a struggle for the life of others. Further, the selfish struggle is dependent for success upon the unselfish; the battle for existence would defeat itself in a single generation were it not for the recruiting power of the battle for the existence of others. But the second step in Mr. Kidd's discussion is still more extraordinary, as seen in his notion of human progress.[1] The *summum bonum* is simply the gratification of appetite. The means of physical subsistence is the great object of quest. The ideal is, What shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and where withal shall we be clothed? The biological problem, or one half of it, the battle for life against a multitude of competitors, is carried up and becomes our whole rational problem. Progress is naked material-

[1] Social Evolution, ch. iii.

ism, without even the fig-leaves of scientific, æsthetic, and philosophic interest to serve as a partial covering. If Mr. Kidd had seen both sides of the life of nature, if he had observed there the parentalism as well as the egoism, his biological importation would have been very different. He would then have been able, in strict fidelity to biological science, to define human good as having in it, under its common forms, intellectual, æsthetic, and moral elements; as made up not only of food and clothing and shelter, but also of a longing to give and receive love and sympathy, of a confederated endeavor after truth and beauty and righteousness. The biological *summum bonum* is not simply life, but life in the wonderful mutualism of the family and the tribe; and the chief good of man cannot be lower, must be higher. The next step in Mr. Kidd's pure individualism is exhibited in his treatment of reason. Nature means the struggle for existence in lower animal forms; progress means the successful battle for life among the higher animal forms, that is, among mankind; and reason is simply the faculty that mirrors the interest of the human Ishmaelite, and that urges him to strengthen his hand against all the other hands that are raised against him. An unmoral nature gives birth to an unmoral man, and the unmoral man seeks an unmoral good under the sanction of an unmoral reason. It is plain that Mr. Kidd's

reason needs to be converted, as it is evident that his idea of progress needs to be enriched and transformed, and his conception of nature corrected.[1] Reason is the source of our ideals of truth and beauty and goodness, the fountain of the whole altruism actual and possible in human life; it is the creative centre of all fraternity in the discovery of reality, of all sympathy in the vision and enjoyment of the beautiful, of all brotherhood in the duty and privilege of social existence. Reason is the absolute contradiction of individualism,[2] the blessed mother of the forces

[1] "The question all turns on what we conceive to be the essential nature of man. Is he essentially a bundle of animal appetites and passions, supported for a little while by a framework of bone; wrapped up for a season in a blanket of flesh; lighted by a flickering candle of intelligence, just sufficient to show him the objects by which he may gratify these animal appetites and passions? If the appetites are the man, and intelligence is his adjunct and instrument, then indeed the antagonism between such an individual and society is, as Mr. Kidd tells us, hopeless and irreconcilable; and the only hope of getting social conduct out of him is some 'ultra-rational sanction' which shall startle him into a wholesome fear of penalties, or shock him into a prudent concern for his fate in the hereafter. Such an abstract individual, such an animal in human form, however, nowhere exists. It is a fiction of the imagination to which no real being corresponds. *Unus homo, nullus homo* (One man is no man at all)." President Hyde, Social Theology, p. 46.

[2] These words were written before the appearance of President Hyde's admirable book, Social Theology; it is, however, comforting to be supported by an independent witness of his strength. "Reason is the bond that binds mankind together." Social Theology, p. 47.

that declare man to be needful to man, that bind life to life and all to the Infinite. Knowledge is possible only because reason converts the individual things of sense into orders and classes and kingdoms. Abolish reason and the universe becomes an atomic universe with no soul, no society, no God anywhere, and with no need for them. Mr. Kidd's idea of the irreducible conflict between individual and social good is a nightmare following upon a late and heavy and too exclusive meal upon Humism. It rides him into horrors, but then the horrors are imaginary. The postulate of the moral life is, that the true good of all involves the true good of each. Christ was not robbed when he was crucified, and the penitent thief found the *summum bonum* upon the cross. Every man worthy of the name would brand himself as a coward and a slave if he should define his good as exclusive of that of his fellow-men, and he would pass upon himself this sentence of condemnation, in every civilization of which the record remains, and in the name, not of an "ultra-rational" religion, but in the simple dignity of reason itself. There was a time when the theologians were the great dealers in the monstrous dogma of total depravity; now scientific writers are carrying on the trade.

This is the philosophic foundation upon which Mr. Kidd builds his social religion; and it is the overwhelming conviction that upon such a basis

there is room for no religion whatever, that must turn the believer in Christianity into an uncompromising antagonist of the philosophy of this remarkable book. The insight which the volume embodies into the process of social development, and its profound recognition of religion as the ultimate power in all human progress; the pertinent and important criticism that it contains upon the attitude of contemporary science toward the deeper problems of life; the sign of the times that the discussion is; the token that the former things are passing away that one must see in it; and the prophet of the new century with its fresh gift from God, — cannot reconcile one to the undisguised Humism of its philosophy, or mitigate one's opposition to a work that provides no basis for religion in the nature of ascertainable reality. Humism is logical individualism, and its outcome is nihilism.

The other extreme is socialism, which in its turn disregards an essential part of ultimate reality. It loses sight of the reality of the individual. Its metaphysics is pantheism, one Eternal Being prevailing over all, disregarding all. In human affairs society is this sole being, whose absolutism is, from the opposite extreme, the destruction of humanity. These are the two extremes, the Scylla and Charybdis, between which the human race must sail. For "neither socialism nor individualism can, with any propriety,

be accepted as the true form of social organization, or its doctrine identified with sociology, or the science of society." [1]

It is impossible, however, for any right-minded man to withhold sympathy from the causes out of which socialism, as a doctrine of reformation, is born. The most deplorable of the contrasts that exist in human society are those which concern life itself. When one looks into the existence of the extant savage of to-day, the first thing that impresses the beholder is the meagreness of his life. History means next to nothing to the savage; he is instructed and consoled by no access to the memory of mankind. The past does not gather for him like clouds about the setting sun; it has no romance of tenderness and no fund of beauty from which to feed his heart. Neither has he any ennobling sense of the future. He has no consciousness that he is living at the daybreak of the world, no feeling that under his eyes the spring of an eternal hope is rising; he is without the strength and courage that come from science; he has no interest in art; the worlds of music and poetry are for him nonexistent; and to the greatness that comes of holding and living under a noble consistent thought of the universe he is an absolute stranger. He lives largely in his appetites, in his unformed instincts, in barbaric customs. The contrast ap-

[1] Socialism, Flint, p. 19.

pears at once when one places beside this savage a representative of our better modern life. The first thing noticeable in this man is the expansion and richness of his interests. His sense of history is a constant source of comfort, and his anticipation of the new eras that are coming is likewise an unfailing force in his heart. He looks before and after, and in a noble sense pines for what is not. His worlds in space and in time are very grand, and his imagination is under the incessant and magnificent appeal that comes out of the vast past behind him and the great sky over him. Through the instrumentality of books, he walks with the men who lived at the dawn of the world, when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. He migrates with Abraham, leads Israel out of bondage with Moses, is rapt with Isaiah in the vision of the Eternal, goes abroad with the psalmists when their hearts are full to hear them break into song, listens to Jesus on the Mount of Beatitudes, and keeps company with Paul and John in their great thoughts and enterprises. Or, striking out into another mighty civilization, he lives in the wondrous beauty of Homer's world; walks the streets of Athens in the age of Pericles; opens his life to the appeal of wisdom, eloquence, art, poetry, and a thousand rich and splendid interests. Following his human sympathies, he sees Rome founded, looks upon Cæsar and Taci-

tus; wends his way down the long, dark mediæval world; is present at the birth of the modern era; hears Dante sing; beholds Michael Angelo build and Raphael paint; witnesses the magnificent pageant that Shakespeare puts upon the stage; and enters into the new thought, the new science, and the vaster life of to-day. The contrast between the life of this representative of our better modern civilization and that of the savage is simply overwhelming.

Now, it is the consciousness of this contrast existing within the bounds of civilization that is the deepest cause of the unrest and the wild socialism of the time. Take, for one member of this contrast, one of our wealthier church members in a great city. His home is in the best part of the city; he has the means to make it beautiful; he is able to invite into it those who bring with them intelligence, refinement, and sympathy; and he can do for his children all that it is good for them that he should do. He has had an education, and that gives him a certain mastery of the world. He commands an annual revenue that, a few centuries ago, would have made even kings happy. He has books, and considerable leisure to make their acquaintance. Works of art meet his vision almost every day of his life, and he is under the perpetual stimulus of elevated friendships. He has the church of Christ, with its unspeakable history, with its

power to purify and strengthen the heart, and with its sublime interpretation of the universe and of man's place in it. How abundant and desirable existence is in the case of this man! Look, however, upon the other picture. Think of the home in the worst section of the city; the absence from it of the things that refine and uplift; the bare presence of the food essential to keep soul and body together; the mother fighting sickness without help, and battling without success against the uncleanness that besets her poor, wearied and worried life at every step; the father working from morning to evening, year in and year out, without any prospect of catching up with his obligations, under the strain of toil, the harrow of disappointment, the iron despotism of circumstances, the poverty and meanness of his lot. What is history to him but a dead past? What is the future but a place that holds within it a quiet grave, for whose peace he would often thankfully exchange his present painful, ineffectual struggle? Science means nothing for him but a new invention making his work less indispensable. By art he understands something that idle fools talk about. Now and then, indeed, a song of other days reaches his heart, and gives him the comfort of a few tears. The Divine scheme of the universe appears to him a mockery; or it seems to have left him and his pale-faced, pathetic children and their poor mother

outside of its beneficent movement. His universe seems an Inferno, and existence itself a curse. Thus in the tremendous contrast in the human life of the civilized world is born the rage of those whose lives are reduced to a shadow and a mockery against those whose lives are rich and full, and who are utterly heedless of the multitudes whose hearts are wrung every day. In old Athens, the rock on whose top sat the court of the Areopagus, representing the highest reason and the best character of the Athenian state, had underneath it the Cave of the Furies.[1] The rock that had a summit so noble and a base so terrible, that held within its extremes the home of a benign order and the Cave of the Furies, is the symbol of the appalling contrasts that meet one in the life of mankind to-day. It is not primarily a question of money, or position, or work, or leisure; it is fundamentally a question of life. In one class life is rich and full; in another it is destitute, afflicted, tormented. This is the condition that everywhere arrests the eye of the beholder, the condition that is producing the agitations and social earthquakes of our century.

Now Christianity meets this defect of life with the gospel of life. Christianity is the coming of the Divine Life as revelation, as power, as the form of the Infinite Love. The first great need is light, revelation of the Divine plan of society.

[1] Socialism, Dr. Hitchcock, p. 7.

Through the career of Christ, the true order for man is made to appear. Masterhood and servanthood are not abolished; inequalities of endowment and acquired capacity remain; fitness for the various functions of society continue as diverse as ever; the human world still resembles the natural in its elevations and depressions. But there is discovered a new relationship in humanity. It is the great commonplace of brotherhood supreme over all inequalities and diversities, and working out through them a richer and vaster life for the social whole. This community of brothers, some of whom have five talents and some but one, and all of whom are under the sternest obligation to improve and increase what has been committed to them, stands under the fatherly government of God. Human lives rise into heaven, they appear before God, they are under his Fatherhood, the subjects of his discipline and compassionating, redeeming love; and they are interrelated one with another, each with all and all with each, as are the trees in a great forest through the intergrowth of roots and the interlocking of branches. Under the industrial order is the moral order of human life; under the questions of trade are the questions of humanity; beneath the forms of the business world lie the immutable facts of human brotherhood and the Divine Paternity.

This is the first step to be taken in answer to

the social need of the time. The primary question is one of light, of revelation. What is the true order for human beings, and how are they related one to another according to the ultimate facts and forces of the case? Man is defined both by the Christless capitalist and the wild socialist in terms of industry. The thought of both moves wholly in the materialistic sphere. There is so much wealth, that is, articles which are useful and which possess exchangeable value, produced every year, and the problem is simply one of distribution. The whole fight is carried on in the realm of the material, and for the execution of its purpose it must look to force. And not infrequently the combatants change sides. The insolvent capitalist becomes the crazed socialist; the successful laborer leaves the ranks of socialism, and is transformed into a tremendous individualist. The battle is, as has been well said, between the Haves and the Have Nots. Those who have, want the present order to go on; those who have not, would like a change. Meanwhile failure of one of the haves turns him over to the side of the revolutionists; and success of one of the have nots, puts a stop to his wild speech, and carries him quietly over to the conservatives. The truth of the whole matter appears very clearly in the answer of the Scottish Highlander to the question of his former party leader. Said the agitator, "You used to be a

tremendous radical, and now you are an immovable conservative: will you be good enough to give the reason for this revolution in your opinion?" The reply was, "Nothing is easier; I have now a croft and a coo."

While the problem is thus understood, progress toward the settlement of social difficulties is impossible. It is here that Christianity comes to the rescue. It converts the industrial question into the moral question, the problem of trade into the problem of humanity. It refuses to regard men as simply creatures of the seen and temporal, mere animals with a capacity for business, and whose social arrangements are necessarily made with an eye to the selfish advantage of one class over another. It persists in regarding them as brothers in a grand community of duties and privileges, and under the providence and moral discipline of a common Eternal Father. It preaches the reality of the kingdom of God as giving the ultimate order for human existence. Behind all institutions civil and ecclesiastical; back of all forms of trade whether competitive or coöperative, under the entire life of mankind, is the moral order that includes all men in one brotherhood subject to the Divine Fatherhood. The questions of capital and labor, the problems of industrial and social forms, must be carried out of the lower courts of mere materialism where they are at present being tried, and where deci-

sions that are settlements never can be had, to the supreme tribunal of humanity under the sovereignty of the Divine Paternity. The appeal of the workman must not be to the humanity of the capitalist while he retains his own selfishness; nor must the capitalist appeal to the humanity of the workman while he keeps his hardness of heart. Both must go out of the lower court into the higher, from animalism to manhood, from the bitterness of enemies into the mood of Christian brotherhood. If the social quarrel is that of dogs over a bone, there is absolutely no hope of just settlement; the strongest dog will get the bone every time, and the rest will have only the comfort of howling. The ascension of all parties to the fight into Christian humanity is the indispensable preliminary of the moral adjudication of the case.

But Christianity not only brings light; it also supplies the power of realization, and that is perhaps the deepest need of human nature. The lines of the Greek poet tell the tale: —

> "Oft have I lain awake at night and thought
> Whence came the evils of this mortal life;
> And my creed is that not thro' lack of wit
> Men go astray, for most of them have sense
> Sufficient, but that we must look elsewhere.
> Discourse of reason tells us what is right,
> But we fall short in action." [1]

[1] Euripides Hippolytus, lines 375–381, Goldwin Smith's translation.

A good creed does not always carry with it a good character. Ideals, even where they are genuine, are very different from realizations. Many have the revelation of duty who do not possess the power of obedience. The government of our great cities is admirable upon paper, but in fact it is one of the scandals of the civilized world. The abstract, constitutional, paper creed of New York, Boston, and Chicago is doubtless very good; the fitting and faithful embodiment of the excellent symbol in municipal administration is another matter. Every patriotic American believes that in theory he lives under the best government in the earth; but if he is familiar with the history of politics and the conduct of the public service, he must often feel how immeasurably below the ideal promise is the actual fulfillment. This statement does not imply that the discrepancy between personal, municipal, and national creed and performance comes of insincerity and hypocrisy. The state of things that one now beholds, one can imagine to exist, in less aggravated forms, without the intervention of intentional widespread knavery. The truth is, personal righteous living is a difficult task; the just and pure administration of the affairs of a great city is a perplexing problem; and the wise and beneficent control of the interests of a mighty nation is a tremendous tax upon the resources of human nature.

This line of remark inclines one to patience with the present order of society, whose working results in great inequalities, in shocking forms of injustice, in outrageous inhumanities. To manage a world, to control the enterprise of mankind, to govern the industrial activity of the whole earth, is a stupendous undertaking. It is no wonder, when one considers human limitation, that incidental outrages occur. The engineer cannot always stop his train in time, strikes a carriage crossing the track, and hurls to death a whole happy household; a captain is unable always materially to slacken the momentum of his ship as it emerges from the fog-bank with another crossing its bows, and so the unfortunate craft ahead is cut into two and sunk, perhaps with all on board. Much more must this be the case when it is a question of the control of the whole social movement. It is so immense, is under such momentum, and requires so much intelligence and power to handle it, that it is no wonder that the vast leviathan occasionally runs down whole fleets of interests and just claims that happen to cross its bows. It is for the greatest man, backed by the greatest people, a tremendous task to govern; and the perfected form of human society man is at present unable to frame, nor is he equal to the best use of the imperfect form under which he lives.

All this makes evident the need of society

for the second great message of Christianity, — power, moral dynamics. A perfect social scheme is not self-operating, and in the management of it, as men now are, they would make as big blunders as they do to-day. A circular saw is an almost perfect instrument for turning trees into timber, and yet it is an instrument whose operation may well inspire fear. It will go through a finger or a foot, an arm or a leg, the body or the brain, with the same remorseless ease and celerity with which it goes through a log of wood. Schemes for the righteous control of the sum total of human life are one thing, the absolute management of them is another. The truth is, the coming of the Holy Spirit is the only adequate hope and help for man. The social problem is but the personal and domestic magnified and more complex. The power that reaches and renews the heart is the grace of the Infinite through Jesus Christ. There is such a thing as the leadership of God,[1] and that is given through the person and career of Christ. The personality of Christ is the form for the coming of the moral power of the Infinite; and it is this power that men need for personal conduct, domestic peace, national righteousness, and victorious humanity.

[1] The important bearing of leadership upon the social problem was admirably discussed by Dr. E. Winchester Donald in his lectures before the Lowell Institute for 1895.

Here again, and in connection with the sorest troubles and deepest interests of the race, the supreme divinity of Jesus discloses its significance. There are these maddening contrasts of life in the heart of society. They are reflected upon and discussed popularly, only as effects of an industrial order; they are not traced to their source in man's inhumanity to man. Christianity meets the social difficulty at this point. It brings a revelation of the true order for human beings, and through the Person of the Revealer it introduces the moral power of the Infinite. Now in this connection the deity of Christ is the assurance that the order which he proposes for man is the order which God proposes and in which he lives. Christ gives his conception of the kingdom, his thought of mankind, standing in a community of brotherhood under the Divine Fatherhood; and the conception, the thought, through his leadership, has had and still possesses elemental power. It is indeed the new creating force in human society. Its power is conditioned upon belief, upon the open heart and the ready spirit; and that power will become immeasurably greater if men should be able to hold that the scheme and influence of Jesus have the universe on their side. The ideals of socialism are often not far from the truth; they are frequently but crude versions of Christ's idea of the kingdom of love. The question comes, Where are human beings to

look for the power to realize these ideals? Mr. Kidd writes eloquently of the stock of altruistic feeling with which the race was endowed some two thousand years ago, and which is still unspent. What one wants to know is, Who thus stocked our Western civilization? Is Christ's scheme a chimera, or the true and ultimate interpretation of human life? and is the Infinite, in whom lies the whole menace or hope of man's existence, for or against the Christian programme? The old faith in the deity of Christ is of the utmost significance for the purified ideal of socialism. That sublime belief beholds in the Godhead the ground of human society, its plan, its creative source; and the dynamics of the Eternal Life that will at last make the heavenly communion of Father and Son and Holy Spirit actual in the earthly brotherhood. The city of God must descend out of heaven. The socialistic ideal is doomed if it has the universe against it. Ethics that mean nothing beyond time and space, proposals for human improvement that are vetoed by the Absolute, decrees for man's amelioration that collide with the decree of the Eternal, can have but one issue. The Christian thinker of to-day surveys with the socialist the outrages that result from the operation of the present form of social arrangements. He looks with the deepest sympathy upon the whole sad condition of the vast majority of mankind. He believes in the

advent of a new earth wherein righteousness is to dwell, and for the coming of this kingdom of love he counts it a privilege to labor and live. But the magnitude of the task, and the difficulties besetting it, would overwhelm him in despair if he did not possess Luther's faith.

> "Did we in our own strength confide,
> Our striving would be losing,
> Were not the right man on our side,
> The man of God's own chosing.
> Dost ask who that may be?
> Christ Jesus, it is he:
> Lord Sabbaoth is his name,
> From age to age the same,
> And he must win the battle."

The hope of the reconstruction of human society, apart from the support of the Infinite Life, is the emptiest dream. Out into this Infinite, up into the aboriginal eternal fellowship in the Godhead, the belief in the deity of Christ leads. It beholds in the Godhead the plan for human society; it links the human world to the divine by a cord that cannot be broken; and it supports the grand historic movement upon the ever-brightening social ideal with the sympathy, the decree, the nature of the Absolute.

IV.

The force of the grand historic conception of the Person of Christ, as a weapon against materialism, must not be passed over in absolute silence.

Materialism as a theory of the universe is to be met, of course, upon its own ground. What professes to live by logic must die by logic, if it is to die at all. Whatever comes in the name of reason must receive its warrant of life or death from reason alone. A philosophy that grounds man's existence upon a supposed external physical or non-mental order must be challenged and vanquished by a philosophy that founds human life upon the Infinite Spirit. And this has been done to a demonstration, in the judgment of the vast majority of competent students, by the idealistic philosophy of Germany, as that has been expounded and critically applied by British thinkers of the last quarter of a century. The great and abiding service that Thomas Hill Green performed for English thought consists in his final showing that, if Humism is to be the dominant philosophy, nihilism must be the result. For society and ethics and science and knowledge itself there is absolutely no basis in that system of thorough-going individualism. Never before in the history of speculation in Great Britain has a similar final piece of critical work been done. Others have coöperated with Green at the common task of leading the British mind to comprehend the philosophy on which it was building the interests of the nation and mankind, but for thoroughness and demonstrative force his achievement is monumental. The popular scientific

writers who are proud to trace their speculative descent from Hume, and who have stood in public estimation as the advocates of materialism, or, what amounts to the same thing, who have traced human life to a non-rational origin, have practiced upon themselves and upon the multitudes of their readers a lamentable imposture. They have been the most talkative gentlemen of their time, when, according to the fundamental principle of their philosophy, they should have been dumb. To the coming generation of thinkers there will be something pathetic in the career of a man like Mr. Huxley. He and those who have labored with him for the diffusion of knowledge will pass into history, as the unconscious children of a philosophical tradition, — as men who took their speculative beliefs from Hume, as good Catholics do from the church, without once suspecting that the beliefs, if true, made science itself impossible, without dreaming that the issue of their master's principles was absolute nihilism. For their accomplishments as students of physical science, for their zeal in sharing the brilliant results of their investigations with the public, and for their power as masters of the English tongue, these men deserve great respect. But as philosophic thinkers they have been, as I have already said, both for themselves and their followers, a lamentable imposture. Their triumph in this department has been largely owing to the general igno-

rance upon the ultimate problems of thought; and they remind one of the dying Welsh clergyman who impressed his illiterate English attendants with his command of Hebrew and Greek by interjecting in his talk with them sentences from his mother tongue, which the poor man himself confounded with the original languages of the Old and New Testaments. It is matter for deep regret that the philosophic answer to Humism, and to every system that derives human knowledge and life from a non-rational source, should exist in a form only intelligible to scholars. We need apostles of idealism who shall be able to conceive their gospel in a vivid and vital manner, who shall have the gift of sympathy with the intellectual needs of the masses of intelligent people, and who, by the superb and attractive forms in which they are able to invest their philosophic faith, shall lift it into popular sovereignty. What is already dead for the insight of the thinker should not be allowed to continue its imposition upon the multitude.[1] I am far from believing that idealism in its present shape is the final philosophic gospel; but I cannot help think-

[1] Mr. A. J. Balfour's book, The Foundations of Belief, contains a brilliant application to Naturalism of the negative side of Idealism. The author seems to forget, when he comes to treat of Idealism, that for his triumph over Naturalism he is indebted to that school of thought. His criticism of Idealism is brilliant and suggestive, but hardly goes to the root of the matter.

ing that, if its profound and vital thoughts were made a living part of the national consciousness, there would be a revival of righteousness, ethical passion, and hope, such as this country has never witnessed. For the philosophic student of our time, these thoughts are among the

> "Truths that wake
> To perish never;"

and the call is for a whole army of apostles to hold forth these words of life, and vindicate for the multitude the consciousness that existence has a noble and an unfathomable significance.

However, as a practical argument, nothing is so bewildering and ultimately overwhelming to materialistic opposition as the idea of the Incarnation as realized in Jesus Christ. Even on the lowest possible ground, — on the basis of belief in Jesus as nothing more than the wisest and best man that ever lived, — the conception which his career embodied possesses an incalculable power. Admitting him to be nothing more than the transcendent man that all competent unbelievers are forward to confess him to have been, still his life is the sovereign practical argument against that degradation of the worth of human existence involved in materialism. For the question comes, What did this wisest and best man do with his life? Did he spend it in bewailing the lot of humanity? Did he fill the days, and after him the centuries, with mere melodious sorrow over

the brevity, the emptiness, the tragedy of human existence? Did he exhibit his scorn for the ignorant masses by holding aloof from them? Did he regard them as dumb driven cattle, and was this verdict pronounced by his teaching and endeavor? If, indeed, this wisest and best man had summed up his judgment of human life in terms of mingled pity and contempt, in words that reveal what a poor thing he held it to be, in expressions which showed his deliberate opinion to have been that it was a hopeless evil, — a mistake to be born, a boon to die, — optimists would find it impossible to make headway against an obstacle so stupendous. But there must be a return to the question, What did this supreme man do with his life? He went about doing good. He spent it in the service of the criminal, the vicious, the outcast, the vast weltering masses of abandoned humanity. He took his life, with its superlative wisdom and goodness from his baptism to his crucifixion, and gave it in one continuous sacrifice in attestation of his sense of the worth of the human soul. The life of Jesus was equally his offering to the Infinite and his tribute to the dignity of man. Even on this lowest level, on the simple recognition of him as the wisest and best of mankind, the force of his judgment for the worth of the human spirit, uttered through a career of unparalleled devotion, is sufficient to

paralyze the strongest forms of materialistic belief. In hours of depression, therefore, when

> "Our light is low
> When the blood creeps and the nerves prick
> And tingle, and the heart is sick,
> And all the wheels of being slow,"

when the confidence of reason is for the moment shaken, and the whole scheme of thought that is the support of Christian faith seems but transfigured mist, the fond creation of human longing and love and the order of the universe looks hollow, godless, brutal, reduce Christ to the lowest terms possible, take him simply as the superlative man, and ask what he did with his life. The materialistic notion that makes human life worthless makes the career of Christ folly, his exertion in behalf of ignorance and helplessness fanaticism, his cross mournful, unmitigated, eternal waste. If human existence is meaningless, the career of our best man is lunacy. If we curse humanity we crucify the Lord afresh, and put him to an open shame. Pessimism is impossible in the presence of Christ.

But assume that the consciousness of Christ represents the consciousness of God, and we rise to the true level. Here is the human race toiling up the long ascent from brutehood, living through the unrecorded ages a life of inconceivable struggle; it emerges into history, and becomes able to record its sufferings because they have been

reduced to manageable compass. Next come the vast empires of force, and under them the conviction is born that existence is vain. At a given point of time, not without the noblest preparations, not only in one race but in all associated races, One appears who represents the mind of the Eternal. The whole scene is changed. Suffering then becomes the revealer of the path of life, and the impulse to walk therein; the unrecorded ages of labor and sorrow are converted into a sublime ascent of mankind in response to the Divine election; the long and tragic drama of history takes the form of an evolution of the purpose of God in the education of humanity. The advent of Christ as the accredited representative of the Infinite thus makes unmistakable the august significance of life. The movement of mankind remains wild and terrible, but a purpose is seen subduing it. The path of progress is still an agony and a bloody sweat, but there is no waste; every ounce of pain, every hour of darkness, is made to contribute to the mighty advance, serves to bring out the glory of the receding goal, and is converted into richer and vaster being on the way. The Christian conception of the Incarnation, clearly understood, constantly entertained, and allowed free play over imagination and feeling, will utterly annihilate all opposing forms of thought, and create an optimism that nothing can exhaust. No philosophy at

war with human interests can as much as gain a foothold in a mind and a community under the ascendency of the consciousness of Christ as the consciousness of God. To such a mind and community, such a philosophy becomes incredible and inconceivable. This is part of the meaning of the profound apostolic resolve to preach Christ. It is to employ, in behalf of the world that works and suffers, that has no time and no talent for abstract thinking, an engine of power that will never allow even an invasion of the great and beautiful expanses of faith.

V.

Upon Christ the human race must ever be dependent. In the last analysis, the reason of this is that Christ is not something external to humanity, but first the true Incarnation of its eternal prototype in the Godhead, and second the very divinity with which its spirit is consubstantiated. The coming of Christ means the awakening of humanity to its ideal and divine side; and his departure would signify the abandonment by the race of sonship to the Father in heaven. The rejection of Christ is the expulsion of the divine from human thought and concern, the disowning of all the ties that bind this earthly existence to the Infinite, the degradation of life to the animal level, and the rigid confinement of all its activities and interests within the godless

and soulless categories of sense and time. Humanity thus stands or falls with the acceptance or rejection of its King. The Christ, universally disowned by life as well as by thought, would be a humanity dead; while the Christ universally received would be humanity lifted to the summit of its privilege, and in the happy realization of the end for which it was created.

The true relation of mankind to the Lord Jesus is not grasped until he is regarded as the Incarnation of the Eternal Humanity in which the race is constituted. The philosophy of the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel is essential to the understanding of the advent and career of Jesus. There is eternally in the Godhead a rational, creative humanity, and in that divine humanity our race is constituted. In the Eternal Word, who became flesh in Jesus, men live and move and have their being. The Eternal ideal humanity and the historic fact meet in the prophet of Nazareth. The Eternal thus manifests himself through the divinely human career, and, after the history is made which forever renders impossible the denial that the ideal is the real, the Eternal returns to his pre-incarnate fullness and universality. The historic Jesus is the revelation, the attestation, the demonstration of the Divine Sonship in which men were chosen before the foundation of the world. That Divine Sonship, forever identified with the history of the unique

man, is life and breath and all things for mankind.

The personal conscience is the great witness of this high relationship in the case of the individual. The poor actual of creature life and the awful ideal of the Creator's character are hinted at by the conscience of the savage, are given in more and more impressive forms as it rises in enlightenment. The conscience is the true Jacob's ladder set in the heart of the individual and reaching unto heaven; and upon it the angels of self-reproach and self-approval ascend and descend. The capacity for righteousness is the conscious possession of the normal man, and the discrimination between right and wrong, good and evil, is but the working within the spirit of the Infinite Christ. The power of the historic Christ to quicken the conscience depends upon the essential relation of that organ of the soul to the Eternal Christ. The consciousness that there is an ethical meaning to man's choices and acts, that his career is the subject of moral judgment, that the significance of his thought and behavior reaches beyond time and space, that his being is bound up with the Infinite, is the profoundest import of conscience, and it is the whisper within him of the Word of God. The modern conscience is the creation of the historic Christ, but this creation would have been impossible had not man been constituted in the Eternal Christ.

The public conscience, as it stands expressed in the institutions and lasting literatures of the world, is the irresistible social witness to the fact that humanity is organized in the Lord the Spirit. The ideals in the veneration of which the normal young man and woman contemplate marriage and enter into that state; the feeling of the mother for her firstborn, and the true father for his home; the final cause of all education; the supreme purpose of government; the insight and love and faith of mankind as enshrined in literature; and the institutions that represent the aspirations of the spirit, — all mean nothing unless we assume that the race is in perpetual constitutional converse with the Eternal Humanity. Mephistopheles calls the lover "a sentimental sensualist," and, if one shall adopt his spirit of denial, one must subscribe to his conclusion. If love is but a physical passion, its ideal is but the glow of its lurid fires upon the clouds of imagination. If the physiological movement is the only reality, the lover can never be other than "a sentimental sensualist." But if the stir in the physical nature is but the occasion of the emergence of the ideal, the storm which it is to calm, the chaos which it is to subdue into order and beauty, the material forces through which it is to find consummate human utterance, then the lover is one who is looking upon the face of the Eternal Humanity. Purity and sensuality are

here seen in their infinite contrast. Purity is the lover following his ideal into the humanity of God, convinced that it is the everlasting reality, and returning with it to govern the divine days of engagement and the diviner years of wedded life. Sensuality is contempt of the ideal, the degradation of it to the mere romantic effect of physical passion upon the imagination, the denial that home and its sanctities are amenable to the Infinite Holiness. The sensualist, whether refined or foul, is the worst enemy of mankind. He is the fiendish unbeliever, the denier of the divine significance of human existence, the apostle of atheism, egoism, and filth. The normal lover, on the other hand, is the herald of the ideal, the revealer of the heavenly side of man's nature, the witness of the Infinite Christ; and, so long as the lover does not fail from among men, so long will the belief prevail that the race is created in the Son of God.

There are two alternatives before the parent as he looks with indescribable tenderness and fondness upon his children. He may attribute his parental passion either to blindness or to insight. He knows that the world does not regard his children as he does. He would be ashamed to tell even his friends how much he thinks of them. He is sure that the most sympathetic among them would fail to enter into his mood. Now, one of two things must be true, — either the cold, un-

sympathetic world is right about this man's children, or the world is wrong and the father is right. Is parental fondness the result of insight or blindness, the outcome of the deeper appreciation of human life, or the effect of its silly idealization? The normal person will at once admit that parenthood means insight, and that admission carries the significance of child-life, and indeed all life, to the Divine thought. The mood of true parenthood is but the working in an earthly home of Christ's vision and passion for humanity. If the parental insight and feeling are true, they have the universe on their side; they are lifted into the thought and sympathy of the Infinite; they are a witness that the home, under another aspect, is ordered in the strength of the Lord. The same is true of men in the relations of trade and citizenship and humanity. There is an ideal guiding the wise in all these orders of existence, and it guides evermore to the cradle of Christ. So long as men cry out for justice and sympathy in trade, for wisdom and righteousness in government, and for brotherhood in humanity, so long will there be the present day revelation that human society is in converse with the Eternal, that it is organized in the Lord the Spirit. As for literature, it is man's homage to the ideal enshrined in forms of imperishable beauty; it is but another name for his faith in the fathomless significance of life, and

the conviction that the source of its greatness lies in everlasting dependence upon the Divine. Moral idealism is the most persistent fact in the history of man, and it must be one of two things, — the proof that the race is under a standing delusion, or that it is living in the Eternal Humanity of God, that Humanity which became Incarnate in Jesus Christ.

This mystic union of the Lord and the race, which has everything on its side, if there be a spiritual world at all, and a God answering to the necessities of the case, is a familiar thought in the New Testament. There is the Master's beautiful image of the vine and the branches. The consciousness of a common life, of a life prophetic of an end, of a life in the realization of its end, — that is the fact humanized. Out of the vine comes the stream of vitality; it goes on increasing in the branches, disclosing its purpose more and more clearly; it comes at last to the ripened fruit. The consciousness of a divine life issuing from the Christ with whom men are united, the prophetic increase of this consciousness, and its movement upon a glorious ethical end, — this the thought of the mystic dependence of man upon the Master as expressed in his own teaching. Paul's image is that of the human body. Of that body Christ is the head. The apostle's figure does not cover, and it was not meant to cover, the total relation of mankind to

the Lord; but it does exhibit impressively the organic union, the inseparableness of living humanity from the living Christ. Until one sees this essential dependence of the race upon its Divine Head, the full meaning of the Incarnation cannot be grasped. Christ is the keystone in the arch of humanity. Without him it is incomplete, and cannot for any length of time bear the burden of its own weight, to say nothing of the service to which, in the courses of history, the Master Builder may turn it. But in Christ the race becomes conscious of its power; its inherent strength passes from member to member; and the more it is pressed by the weight of life, the closer it is joined in common duty, the compacter it becomes in lofty fellowship, and the grander the development of its utilities for the purposes of God.

CHAPTER IV.

CHRIST IN THE PULPIT OF TO-DAY.

"ἡμεῖς δὲ κηρύσσομεν Χριστὸν ἐσταυρωμένον, Ἰουδαίοις μὲν σκάνδαλον ἔθνεσιν δε μωρίαν, αὐτοῖς δὲ τοῖς κλητοῖς, Ἰουδαίοις τε καὶ Ἕλλησιν, Χριστὸν θεοῦ δύναμιν καὶ θεοῦ σοφίαν." — 1 Corinthians i. 23, 24.

"But about the life and sayings of Jesus there is a stamp of personal originality combined with profundity of insight which . . . must place the Prophet of Nazareth, even in the estimation of those who have no belief in his inspiration, in the very first rank of the men of sublime genius of whom our species can boast. When this preëminent genius is combined with the qualities of probably the greatest moral reformer, and martyr to that mission, who ever existed upon earth, religion cannot be said to have made a bad choice in pitching on this man as the ideal representative and guide of humanity." — JOHN STUART MILL, Essays on Religion, pp. 254, 255.

"For it is plain that if Christ be dead, he could not be expelling demons and spoiling idols."— ATHANASIUS, The Incarnation, chap. xxxii. 4.

CHAPTER IV.

CHRIST IN THE PULPIT OF TO-DAY.

THAT which in the second chapter was a Christological interpretation, and which in the third chapter became a theological principle both creative and conservative, now becomes the supreme homiletical method and power. As in Mendelssohn's "Hymn of Praise" there is first the fact of the victory of light over darkness at the creation, then the prophetic significance of this single triumph, and lastly the wonderful artistic achievement, so in this discussion the Divine Christ becomes the prophetic Christ, and both are consummated in the Christ of power. An historical character truly interpreted yields a working philosophy of the universe, and that becomes a message for the preacher, and upon his lips presses for triumphant utterance in the life of mankind. Thus the modern pulpit has a large task on its hands, — a task that must mean for all genuine preachers a magnificent opportunity. Still the very greatness of the opportunity must create a certain noble solicitude, must tend to press the preacher back upon the Infinite inspirations. It

was the habit of Jesus, in the midst of his work and face to face with his opportunity, ever recipient although he was of his Father's help, periodically to retreat upon the life of God. It was a custom with him, after caring from morning to evening for the sick and the ignorant and the sinful, to retire at night into some mountain apart, and there enter into the heavenly communion and replenish himself out of the bosom of the Eternal through solitary prayer. It must be remembered that the transfiguration occurred in the night; that it took place after a day of exhausting labor in the heart of boundless and bewildering opportunity; that it was while he prayed that the fashion of his countenance was changed, and his raiment became whiter than the snows of Hermon, and his head more glorious than the sun at noon; and that perhaps it was but one of many similar expressions of the unlimited presence of God in his soul, as he retired from the world and threw his wearied humanity wide open in a sweet and awful trust to the Infinite Spirit. There is a divine philosophy in these sacred experiences of the Lord. The world was a stupendous practical problem to him, and work meant a victorious campaign against ignorance and brutality and persistent wrong-doing. The call was ever loud for reinforcements. It was thus the pressure upon him of his work, it was the grandeur and arduousness of his task, that constrained him thus to

return to his Father. And it is one of the better signs of the times that everywhere in the church of to-day the representative and leading minds are returning to Christ. Behind the critical activity concentrated upon the New Testament is the deep-seated desire to move through apostolic opinion and idiosyncrasy, through evangelistic prepossession and habit, through every likely or possible accidental accretion, as close as can be to the pure and august word of the Lord. Those who fail to discern this longing as the controlling force in all the nobler New Testament scholars will be sure to misunderstand their spirit and misjudge their work. Back of the new school of ecclesiastical historians lies the same great impulse. Those who have undertaken the great task of historical analysis, of separating into its different strands the record of the Christian church, who think they are able by the subtle chemistry of insight and scholarship to eliminate from faith the alien heathen elements, and to bring into conspicuous singleness the creative spirit of Christ, are doing so, that they and their brethren may have over them only the authority of the Master. The appreciation of their purpose must beget patience with these historians in what seems destructive work. Their motive is nobler and greater than their method, is infinitely richer and wider than their somewhat provincial outlook upon the world of thought. They are animated

by nothing less than the passion to come face to face with the Mind out of which Christian civilization, in all its worthy phases, has grown, and whose presence in human history is the force creative of all progress and all hope. So, too, those who are interested in a new theological habitation for faith, who seek emancipation from the bondage of mediæval opinion, who want the modern world of life in all its richness and compass to be mastered by adequate ultimate conceptions of God and man, are on a deep return to Christ. The longing for the true word of Jesus, the desire to reach the creative mind underlying Christendom, the hunger for help in the task of interpreting the world and its life, is the great motive in the characteristic criticism, historical research, and theological construction as at present carried on by Christian scholars. The ultimate problems of reason are so difficult, the final questions of faith are so urgent and perplexing, that along a score of different lines Christian thinkers are returning to their Master. It is felt more and more that there can be no substitutes in creeds, in church authority, in patristic tradition, in apostolic interpretation, for him, and that without him there can be no solution of our human problem.

The preacher must join in this sublime return. His question is primarily one of moral dynamics, and it can be met, as to-day it requires to be

met, only by a new and profounder sense of the meaning of Christ in the spiritual training of mankind. Paul's career as a preacher must be dated from the heavenly vision of the risen, reigning, and infinite Lord, the vision to which he was not disobedient. His consciousness of the living Christ to whom he belonged, to whom he surrendered himself, and for whom he claimed the Jew and the Greek, the bond and the free, is the creative source of his mighty ministry. That amazing vision was the head-waters of his whole career; he lived out of its perennial inspirations, refilled his heart from its exhaustless fullness, and, through a service almost unparalleled in its many-sidedness and devotion, carried the significance and moral power of his Master to the ends of the world. For Paul the only adequate inspiration of the preacher was the living, reigning, infinite Christ, and the only adequate work of the moral teacher of men was revealed through the same Life. Paul was born with a hunger for righteousness, and he had sought it by following such ideals as Judaism could set before him. This method of search, however, brought him no peace. The ideal was not great enough to melt him into penitence, to transform him into love, and to run his whole being into the moulds of the Divine righteousness. Despair began to settle down upon him, and that sort of despair which is most destructive of humanity, — moral

despair. Fanaticism came to his rescue, and gave him a brief experience of delusive hope. In the midst of this trouble, the vision found him, set before him the old ideal of righteousness, now magnified and outshining the sun, and clothed his spirit with the power of moral attainment, pressed all his powers into the great and endless pursuit, and hung in his imagination the image of the far-off crown of rectitude which he now saw would one day be put upon his head. It was worth while to follow a Master who could thus change the heart and begin in it the deposit of eternal life. One who could thus reveal righteousness and confer the power of progressive attainment must be accepted and served as Lord. And the object of the great acceptance and service is thus defined. The world lies in wickedness, and yet it is hungry for the strength and consolation of moral self-respect. The apostle saw, what every preacher must see, that the deepest need of the human heart is the need of rectitude. Without this wealth, position, influence, learning, genius, high material civilization is but a city built upon a bog. It must sink into eternal insignificance in the mud and filth of unrighteousness. The *summum bonum* is the problem, not primarily of philosophers, but of humanity, and the vital search that does not lead to personal rectitude ends in the bitterness of the Dead Sea. Paul's Christ still concerns the preacher, not only

as adequate inspiration, but also as defining his work. His is the message of righteousness, so full of ideal splendors as to overawe and win the heart, so instinct with moral power as to renew the imbecile will, stir it to persistent endeavor, and keep it in the great hope of ultimate victory. The same heavenly vision gave this apostle an adequate faith. Everywhere the Lord the Spirit had gone before him, as the Eternal preacher of righteousness, and the notes of his voice Paul could hear in all languages and in all literatures. He who appeared to his servant had the Divine decree in his favor, and the stars in their courses were fighting for the advance of his kingdom. This, in a few words, is the revelation made to all Christian preachers by the first and greatest of their number. The Christian pulpit is the creation of Christ, and its power will last only so long as his spirit controls and inspires it. The concern of this chapter with Christ is as a sublime utility in the formation of human character, as the supreme instrument of the Spirit of God in the evolution of the religious life of men. If God is the centre of the universe, Christ is the centre of history, and no reform or permanent onward movement in society can be accomplished or expected without his intervention and support.

John Stuart Mill has said that "it would not be easy, even for an unbeliever, to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract

into the concrete than to endeavor so to live that Christ would approve our life."[1] With the support of this statement, it cannot be presumptuous to affirm that the one grand purpose of all genuine preaching must be to make men like Christ. For this end the special gifts, attainments, personal character, position, and influence of the individual preacher are employed. But the preacher must have a message. It must be old, that is, it must be in keeping with the nature of the universe, indorsed by the courses of Providence, sanctioned by the great voices of history, and in sympathy with the profoundest needs and the loftiest aspirations of mankind. It must also be new, that is, it is essential that it should be born into the preacher's soul with overmastering vividness, and held there, in an atmosphere of homage and in the mood of obedience, as the veritable utterance of God. This message will include the higher elements in the ethnic religions, the permanent ideal forces of Hebraism, the spiritual wealth of Christian history, and, as the sum and superlative form of all ancient truth and the incomparable germ of all later discoveries, Christianity itself. The preacher's message will almost inevitably connect itself in some way with the historic Christ. As a body of truth to be believed, and as leading to a theory of the universe, it must compel men to think of him; and as

[1] Essays on Religion, p. 255.

a system of ideas and influences for the education of humanity in justice, mercy, and faith, it must again connect itself with the Master. There are in preaching these three things, — the end, and the method, and the power. The end is that men may be brought to God; the power is the energy of ideas filled with the Spirit of God; and the method is the ascertained path of the transforming influence as that has come upon men in the past. The greatest test of the modern preacher occurs at this point. If history has nothing to say to him as to the mediation of God, he is missing a fundamental truth; but if he is able to discover the method of the Divine Spirit in the past, he is clothing himself with power. The majesty of the end, that men may come to live in the consciousness of the Eternal Father, is apt, in our time, to obscure our sense of the importance of the method; and, without the method that history has revealed and vindicated, the power can never come, at least in its fullness. Inasmuch as the main business of the Christian pulpit must ever be to bring the power of the Infinite to bear upon the finite, to enable men to behold all things in God, to interpret nature, social ties, and human history in terms of the Eternal Love, to inform the intellect, raise the affections, inspire the spirit, and shape the character out of the boundless and creative goodness of God; and since God is with us, and we are

the inheritors of a vast spiritual possession, — the temptation is to ignore the way in which this possession has come into our hands, to separate the idea and the history, the divine message and the course of events through which it lives, the revelation of God and the fields of time and circumstance and personality in which it first blossomed and came to maturity. If there is any pertinence in this discussion, it lies here. The end and the method and the power cannot be separated. For the religious consciousness Christ is a permanent necessity; and for the pulpit that would purify and greaten that consciousness, he is the mightiest force known to man.

The youngest among the present generation of ministers can recall the large place that Christ held in the preaching of other days. In Unitarian and Trinitarian pulpits alike, there was heard the constant recurrence of his name, the frequent citation of his teaching, the inspiring use of his example, — above all, the promise of the mystic sense of God's pity and love to those who would become his disciples. In the ministrations of the older pulpit, there was a use of the name of Christ full of rich significance; he had untold immediate value to the soul, and an infinite representative value; and as he was presented to the conscience and feeling of the time, floods of transforming influence broke through him upon the hearts of men. We can all recall the unde-

vout days in which we made this pulpit habit the subject of not entirely sympathetic study. Probably we concluded that the name of Christ was not always understood by the men who used it, and sometimes, I fear, we were tempted to think that the language was excessive and overdone. Occasionally a burst of genuine eloquence would strike us in this mood like a celestial cyclone, level our prejudice with the ground, scatter our opposition, and make us feel in our inmost heart the reality of the mystic experience to which Christ bore such transcendent meaning. In the presence of this characteristic mood of the older pulpit of New England, the question has arisen whether this essentialness of Christ to the religious consciousness, and to the powerful Christian pulpit, was apparent or real; whether it was a habit of the time, generated by a peculiar system of theology, or something grounded upon the nature of man, and consonant with the quickening movement of God in human history; whether it was in character artificial and temporary, or language bearing in it the image of imperishable truth, and therefore destined, amid whatever modifications, to persist in essential integrity. The question now is, whether this old-fashioned Christ-consciousness is worthy of enthronement in the pulpits of all communions; whether it is a version of truth that can never become obsolete, and a rendering of spiritual reality that should

be reverently cherished, universally and thankfully used. For myself, I believe that Paul's message to the Corinthians — Jesus Christ and him crucified — is the highest that has ever come to man, and the personal form which the divine idea assumed in the apostolic announcement appears to me essential to the reality and permanence of the idea itself. The mood of the older pulpit, the mood indeed of the powerful pulpits in all these centuries of Christian history, contains, I cannot but believe, in a solution of feeling, the truth that is to renovate the world. That truth is God in Christ reconciling this primarily animal and sensuous world unto himself, and lifting it by his own mediated might into the life and freedom of the Spirit. For all men Christ must become more and more the Supreme Mediator of God, and must not the pulpit that is to grow in power lay stronger emphasis upon the personality of the Mediator?

I.

As a preliminary in the discussion of the place of Christ in the pulpit of to-day, it must be remarked that preachers need to revive the sense of the supremacy of their calling by living more completely under the shadow of the Divine Preacher. Preaching has in a way become universal. All the sciences, all the noble arts, and all serious schemes of thought point finally to life

as their grand ultimate. The ethical issues of all departments of knowledge are under universal consideration, and the application of ideas to life is the calling that includes the serious and positive nature everywhere. This fact has bewildered the preacher of Christianity, and at times made him ready to confess that the pulpit had lost its power. It remains true, whatever reason may be assigned for it, that there exists a widespread undervaluation of the prophetic office in the Christian ministry. Societies, organizations, executive power, business ability, are common substitutes for the noble supremacy of the preacher's soul through his sermon. Preachers need to return to their Divine Master along this line. He created no outward society, formed no institution, relied for the permanence of his influence upon no administration. He was the chief of preachers, and moved upon the mind of his time through his imperishable words. Never man spake as he did, and one of the reasons for this unique power of speech was that he believed in the office of speech. He made his words unforgetable; he coined them in terms of eternal truth and beauty and love; he adjusted them to the historic sense, the immediate sympathies, and the largest hopes of those whom he addressed; he fashioned them in the feeling of humanity, bathed them in the undefinable dreams of the soul, informed them with the sanctity of slum-

bering sorrows and ideals, constituted them the heralds of a new day, the apostles of a divine world for mankind. The Lord was not an extempore preacher, even if he did not use notes. Consideration is the mark of every utterance of his; and the wondrous message ran in forms of speech, that are matchless. His kingdom was not of this world. He had no system of government, no magistrates, no army and no police, no mighty external contrivance to give him ascendency over mankind. He relied upon the absoluteness of his thought, the divineness of his feeling, and the fitness and unforgetableness of his speech, to win for him his empire. And Cæsar is gone, but Christ remains. Out of the golden tradition of the Lord's preaching came the gospels, and from it as inspiration came the whole body of New Testament literature. The Word conceived in truth, born in love, and spoken in the fullness of insight and power, is the foundation of Christendom. The prophetic office of the ministry, the calling of the preacher, is the cornerstone of our civilization; and if the present members of this calling shall live in the consciousness of Christ the preacher, there will be a universal revival of confidence in their vocation.

When Phillips Brooks died, a New York paper remarked that, inasmuch as he was a preacher, his influence was necessarily a passing one, and the superficial generalization went with the force

of an axiom. The idea was that this man, having done nothing in the way of pure literature, must soon be forgotten, and that when forgotten his influence must be regarded as at an end. Now, with all due respect to literary gentlemen, it may be questioned whether out of the half-dozen books that Phillips Brooks left behind him, as many of them will not be alive a century hence as in the case of a similar number produced by any book-maker of his generation. The books that have longevity, like the men, are those of robust, vital constitution. Form is indispensable to the noblest utterance, written or spoken, or done in color or stone, or musical sounds. But life is a vastly deeper assurance of permanence than form where the two must be contrasted; and if there is life enough in a word it will survive, although it be as enigmatical as the sayings of Heraclitus. If there is vitality in a book, it will last even if its form be as poor as that of the works of Aristotle. The gift of rhyme is no passport to immortality: there are as many forgotten poets in the English language as there are authors of sermons. Insight, love, pure power, serviceableness to humanity, — these are the forces by which books survive. The incompatibility with literature of the highest possible form of pulpit production is refuted by the Parables of Jesus. The compass of the thought is beyond definition, the movement of feeling is

like a heaving sea of divine passion, and the form is that of the consummate artist. The question of art is not primarily one of imagination. It is an issue raised first of all by life. The perfect art has its complete illustration and vindication only in the Incarnation.[1] The Divine idea perfectly uttered in the Divine Life sets the standard for all beauty. When the Word became flesh, the life of man became master, and the imagination of genius sank to its place of due subordination as servant. The consummate literary art of Jesus begins from his perfect embodiment of his Father's will. Out of the supremacy of his humanity comes his inapproachable mastery over the forms of beauty. "True or not," as Romanes well says, the "entire story of the cross, from its commencement in prophetic aspiration to its culmination in the gospel, is by far the most magnificent presentation in literature. And surely the fact of its having all been lived does not detract from its poetic value. Nor does the fact of its being capable of appropriation by the individual Christian of to-day as still a vital religion detract from its sublimity. Only to a man wholly destitute of spiritual perception can it be that Christianity should fail to appear the greatest exhibition of the beautiful, the sublime, and of all else that appeals to our spiritual nature which has ever been known upon the

[1] See Westcott's Essay, The Relation of Christianity to Art.

earth."[1] The harmony of great qualities in Christ is final. The study of the gospels as literature has resulted in a keener appreciation both of the thought and the art in the teaching of Jesus. He is the standard for morality and for art, the consummate expression of both. The immortality of his teaching is sure, because the thought is final and the form surpassing, because the life eternal is there in a body that cannot even grow old. And when one comes to works that are far beneath this absolute standard, the promise of permanence is great and sure in proportion to their vitality. The form of Paul's letters is far from artistic. Eloquent and wonderful as they are in passages, the literary expression cannot as a whole be ranked high. Setting aside single chapters that for majesty and beauty are unsurpassed in the literature of the world, his writings as a body are exceedingly informal. He had no sense of their worth, no remotest suspicion that they would be more highly prized two thousand years after his death than in his own day. They were the answers of a wise and teeming mind to the needs of the hour, and the thought of book-making never entered their author's brain. And yet, with the exception of the Parables of Jesus, there are no writings in the world so much alive and so profoundly influential as the correspondence of Paul

[1] Thoughts on Religion, p. 160.

with the Christian churches of his time. Whatever has life in it will last, and the sermons of Phillips Brooks have as much of that high power in them as any of the prose productions of the generation to which he belonged.

But the assumption, that when a man is forgotten his influence is necessarily over, is wholly unfounded. Keeping to Bishop Brooks as a convenient and magnificent symbol, it must be said that his publications are the smallest part of him. There are thousands of living men and women whose characters he touched with transforming power, and who are the transmitters of the great vital impulse received from him. While the generation lasts to which he spoke, his influence in the world will be conscious and controlling. There is always danger that the good book may be prized above the good man, which is fatal folly. But it is said that men die and books live on. To this it must be replied that the average term of man's existence is greatly in excess of that of even powerful books. One half of the human race, it is computed, die in infancy, and it is believed that a similar computation would show that infant mortality among literary productions is greater far. If it be true that those whom the gods love die young, nine tenths of the books published must be very highly regarded in heaven. More human beings than books can be found, out of every generation, who

have attained the age of one hundred years. Setting aside the few books that cannot die, to the number of which a remarkable century adds one or two perhaps, a human being is a vastly better investment than a novel, or a treatise scientific, philosophical, or theological. The hope of the true book-maker is that his publication may meet a sympathetic mind, fertilize it, command its spiritual power, and thus prolong its life after death. The office of the mother is infinitely greater than that of the successful novelist. The mothers rule the world from their graves. In the influence of Edwards and Bushnell and Emerson and Carlyle, that of their first and greatest teachers still lives. What the last of these writers has said of his mother has its echo in the heart of our whole nobler humanity. "O pious mother! kind, good, brave, and truthful soul as I have ever found, and more than I have ever elsewhere found in this world, your poor Tom, long out of his school-days now, has fallen very lonely, very lame and broken, in this pilgrimage of his; and you cannot help him or cheer him by a kind word any more. From your grave in Ecclefechan Kirkyard yonder you bid him trust in God, and that also he will try if he can understand and *do*."[1] There was a time when noble women forgot their sorrow for joy that a man was born into the world; now it is the issue of

[1] Life of Carlyle, vol. iv. p. 127.

a novel that scatters the deep anxieties. Old Socrates was right in thinking more of the sympathetic and large-minded pupil than of the literary production. The works of Plato are rich and priceless, but Plato himelf is largely the work of Socrates. And the greatest achievement of the master of the Academy was that he moulded the thought and evolved the intellectual power of Aristotle. If fate should submit for the choice of the gifted and powerful a good book or a great character to bear abroad and continue his influence in the world, he would be a fool who should choose the book in preference to the character. Even if their tombstones, unlike that of Fichte's, make no mention of it, the prophecy is forever true that "the teachers shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."[1]

This is the great principle underlying the strange conceit of apostolical succession. The conceit is, that episcopal ordination runs back to the ordination which the apostles received from Christ, and that to the hands of bishops the grace that truly consecrates a man to the work of the Christian ministry is confined. The great principle is, that life comes only from life, and that the moral and spiritual power of the present generation is largely derived from the holy succession that

[1] Dan. xii. 3.

goes back to the creative soul of Christ for its endowment. The unseen is still over the Christian world, and its doors are not shut against its prayers and faith. The windows of heaven are ever open, and the flood of life is always descending into hospitable souls. But all the good that believers enjoy does not come in that direct way. History means more than even the profoundest thinker can know; the ordering of human beings in a grand succession in time counts for much in the education and achievements of mankind. Jesus gathered about him the finest youth of his time. He moulded their thought, controlled their passion, dominated their will, and gave them the life of God. They went forth with the vital supply which grew greater the more it was drawn upon, and established their supremacy over thousands. Again the receivers became givers, the conquered conquerors, and the tide of Divine life rolled over new spaces of our common humanity. And so it has rolled on down to our own generation. It is the stream that makes glad the city of God. It has its head-waters in Christ, and its sacred and ever-broadening channel is the multitude that no man can number that in each generation have believed that the surest way to perpetuate personal power in the earth is to charge a successor with the life of the Lord.

In order to develop the full power of the preacher there must be cherished a supreme in-

difference to the remembrance of mankind. One must rise into the mood that beholds the great moral task of humanity, and that sees that every true word and every pure and brave life, whether remembered or forgotten, is a permanent contribution to the final victorious accomplishment of that task. The supreme question is not whether one is known as having part in the great enterprise, but whether one has in very truth a living influence in it. It is a sacred inducement to this high mood to recall the familiar fact that our civilization is largely the product of the forgotten. The farms of England are a delight to the eye, they are laid out with so much symmetry; the fences of hedge and stone are so fine; the face of the earth wears a cultured look, and exactness and neatness reign everywhere. To whom are Englishmen to-day indebted for bringing the primeval forest into this condition? To more than fifty generations of forgotten toilers. It is largely the magnificent gift to the present of dead and unremembered men. The face of their country they changed; they made it rich with fruitfulness and bright with enduring beauty. Their names have perished, but their work remains. The same holds true of the methods of business. The epochs in the changes of business, like those consequent upon the use of steam and electricity, are remembered; but the multitudes of minor important changes are associated with

no names. The business youth of to-day is the inheritor of a system of untold value, perfected by hosts of sagacious men working in concert, who have passed forever into oblivion. The ocean steamer of to-day is an evolution through gradual improvements from the canoe of the savage. The history gathered up in one of these masterpieces of naval architecture is singularly impressive. Every rib of steel, every bolt and spar, every rope in the rigging, every foot of construction from stem to stern, from keel to deck, and from deck to the pennant flying from the main royal mast, embodies the successive and accumulated inventions of uncounted generations of forgotten men of genius. The anonymous even in good literature is striking. No form of contemporary writing is more powerful than the press. The newspaper wields, from the depth to the height of society, an unmeasured influence. These issues descend upon the community every morning and evening thick as snowflakes. They change the complexion of public opinion, and for the most part the change is an improvement. Untold good is done, and untold evil is averted, by the daily newspaper. The learning, ability, and industry represented by it are immense, and they are anonymous. Many of our finest ballads are of unknown authorship, many of our noblest hymns have broken loose from all personal moorings, and are adrift in the rich and nameless ser-

vice of mankind. It is impossible to break up the fragrance in the summer air and parcel it out as the contribution of separate flowers. So with many of our songs and hymns. They are the sweet exhalations of unknown souls. It is at first almost bewildering to think that this anonymousness reaches to some of the masterpieces of literature. The authorship of the Iliad and Odyssey is past finding out. That wonder of literature, the Book of Job, is a nameless book. The man who first faced the whole problem of human suffering, who gathered into his words the sighs of countless centuries, who poured forth in mournful and majestic utterance his sense of the mystery of life, who drew a character that for sublime resignation and immortal love of the Divine, cannot be matched in the whole range of human compositions, — the spiritual genius who enriched the world with this unsurpassed work of truth and art and life has left no trace of himself in the memory of mankind. What is called the higher criticism is largely an increased sense of the treasure men have in the Old Testament, combined with a fresh realization of the fact that they know not whom to thank for the great inheritance. Who wrote the inimitable biographies in the Book of Genesis? Who produced the magnificent historical epic of the Exodus? Who first told the story of Ruth? Who composed the greatest ode in all literature, the ninetieth psalm? Out of what soul of love came

the hymns of Israel, written as they are "in starfire and immortal tears"? Who was it who laid bare his whole heart in Ecclesiastes? To whom are we indebted for the vision of the conqueror from Edom and the suffering servant of Jehovah? Of much that is most precious in literature, of much that is mightiest in the Bible, one must say, what Origen said of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "no one knows the authorship of it but God." Civilization is largely the product of the unremembered. Taking that of Great Britain as a convenient illustration, one finds it almost impossible to imagine the labor represented in it. English history is but a hint at the infinite unrecorded. One thinks of the missionaries that were sent out into the heathenism of the land, the hosts of successors in other generations, the schools and universities that grew out of the passion for the spread of Christian truth, the books brought into existence to guide the thought and fire the spirit of common men, the language born of love and inspired with renewing grace. One thinks of the toil represented in the physical fibre, the mental habit, and the moral character of the people in the whole complex and stupendous achievement of British civilization; and one beholds through it a host of forgotten teachers, preachers, authors, workers, and sufferers all, in multitude like the stars. Once for all, fame is excluded. The preacher shares the common lot.

His calling is under no special ban. God buries his workmen in oblivion, but carries on his work. The longing of a form of service which shall insure an earthly immortality, or an approach to it, is futile. That is the fortune of but few; and one who deserves it is as likely to find it in the ministry as anywhere else. The preacher Luther is as sure of remembrance as the poet Dante. The question does not turn upon the nature of the calling, but upon the size of the man. And it may be put down as certain that only a handful of men out of any age are big enough to be discernible at the distance of a thousand years. The eternal incentive comes from love. The universe is not anonymous; God's work always bears his signature. The preacher is in a divine world, and the vision of it, and the hope that he may aid in making that world the abode of the whole human race, is a motive with infinite reserves of power.

The office of the preacher opens a door to influence as wide as that offered by any other calling on the earth. It has room for the best exercise of the largest gifts, and permits the richest forms of intellectual and spiritual attainment. It leaves little time for antiquarian taste, for the pursuit of studies that are ornamental rather than useful. There are ten thousand things that need to be done in the intellectual world that the preacher cannot do. But the same thing must be said of

the poet, the scientist, the philosopher, the linguist, and every other citizen in the republic of thought. Division of labor and a rigid form of specialism is the common universal necessity. Still, measuring calling against calling, there is none for which ideas have an interest so deep, and a worth so immediate and indispensable, as the office of the preacher. To the thoroughly equipped preacher of to-day science has a wonderful message. He absorbs the principle, the ideal strength, of her message, passing over the detail that belongs to the specialist. The great ideas that lie in the philosophic systems of the world have more vitality and utility for the preacher than for the thinker who is aiming at the production of a scheme that shall render obsolete the whole mass of preceding speculation. These systems of thought are mines which only the man in sympathetic ethical contact with mankind can operate to advantage. The learning of the historian of philosophy he cannot possess, but the great thoughts of the past he may master and make his own as few can. The same may be said of literature. The niceties of the study and the erudition of the literary commentator he may not have, but the spiritual possession of the vision and the passion of the world's great artists he may assuredly have. No form of human service is better fitted than the Christian ministry to reveal the vitality that is the source of

all great literature. To the preacher, literature must ever be sacred as one of the forms of beauty into which the race has put its deepest, most religious life. For him, more than for most men, its secret must be an open secret.

> "Yet, with hands of evil stained
> And an ear by discord pained,
> He is groping for the keys
> Of the heavenly harmonies."

Even Lowell has left nothing profounder or more adequate on this perennial theme than Phillips Brooks's essay entitled "Literature and Life."[1] It is a classic vindication of literature, readier to yield her deepest thoughts and purposes to the preacher than to most men. As for history, it has a human interest, a symbolic significance, an imaginative value, for the minister of Christ such as it can have for no other man. Time is too limited, duties are too numerous and urgent, to allow the man in charge of a parish to be a master of detail anywhere; but, according to his native intellectual gift, he may live with the ideal forces of the world in a measure and manner preëminent. Preaching may keep him in the kingdom of truth and love, sensible of its transcendence, lifted by the vision of its wealth and limitless reach; and his sermons may be strong and beautiful embodiments of the thoughts which to him are the ultimate realities of the world. The pro-

[1] Essays and Addresses.

phetic office of Christ meant the measureless and infallible vision of the truth, the homage, and the hope of the heart, the strength and freedom of the character, the full communion with the Divine world and the human. For Jesus, the calling of the preacher was largest opportunity, the endless expansion of thought and life and influence. And for those who are baptized into the faith of the Master, the ministry will be the name for the same august opportunity. The call to preach the gospel will be the invitation to the largest and richest intellectual life, to a career in constant communion with the ideal forces of the world and the needs of the human heart, to citizenship in the republic of truth and beauty and love, and to the production of such sermons as shall be the preacher's homage to the divine and his loving tribute to the souls of his fellow-men. The thought of the permanence of these productions will not trouble him. The only permanent forces are God's thoughts, and God's growing, apprehending children; and sermons will be produced with the same affluent indifference as the earth produces flowers. Both the flowers and the sermons are perishable, but the life out of which they come and that to which they minister is eternal; and the preacher's homage is to the creative Life, and the ever-growing human need. Whether Paul wrote the pastoral epistles or not, that is a genuine Pauline expression: "I thank

him that enabled me, even Christ Jesus our Lord, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into his service."[1] He rightly saw that to this calling he owed his insight, his opportunity, his knowledge of the world, his sympathy with mankind, his expanded intellect, his greatened character and ever-widening influence in bringing in the kingdom of God. It was the multitude of cowards that made Gideon's army so worthless at the first. After it was reduced to the immortal three hundred it became invincible. It is the unbelievers in the prophetic office who are in the ministry, those who are drunk with other interests and incapable in this, who demoralize the pulpits of the land. The churches are waiting for a new generation of preachers who shall study their calling in the light of Christ's career, and come forth with boundless confidence in it as furnishing room for the exercise of the greatest gifts, and an opportunity for the most extended and enduring influence. As Dr. Martineau said nearly fifty years ago: "He who finds room, under the conditions of the sermon, to interest and engage his whole soul, would be guilty of affectation were he to disown the occasion which wakes up his worthiest spirit, and which, however narrow when measured by the capacities of other men, is adequate to receive his best thought and aspirations."[2] Although the author of these

[1] 1 Tim. i. 12.

[2] Endeavors after the Christian Life, preface to second series.

words long since graduated from the regular ministry, he has carried into his profoundest work the prophetic gift, and the high distinction of his thinking is that everywhere the ethical interest is kept clearly and reverently in view as final and absolute.

II.

Another preliminary that must not be wholly omitted is that the presentation of Jesus as the embodiment of the pity of God must continue to be one of the great themes of the preacher. Some one has said that men are candidates for rationality rather than strictly rational, and the remark may be extended to other aspects of human life. The multitudes are candidates for morality rather than the possessors of moral character. They are largely children of impulse, with a moral ideal and hope rather than a moral experience. The calling of the Christian is sainthood, but the actual life struggles forward at a tremendous distance behind this flying-goal. In a well-ordered, homogeneous, highly educated community one does not realize readily the full meaning of Jesus as the embodied pity of the Infinite. The average of character is so high, the measure of success is so great, the consciousness of worth and moral strength is so real and inspiring, that one is apt to forget the condition of the outstanding world. When an honored

man is laid to rest, one thinks of the noble use to which talent and opportunity have been turned, and of the "Well done!" that must be his welcome in the unseen. If one is living in circles that are Christian by inheritance, whose men and women have a strength that represents the conquests of many generations of aggressive character, there is one supreme aspect of the gospel that is likely to count for nothing. Jesus could not at first mean the same thing to Paul as to the penitent thief. The apostle could get at that aspect of the gospel only as he transcended his own inheritance, education, imperious will, and preëminently successful career. At the present time the Salvation Army has revived this part of the Christian message. The gospel is not concerned only with successful lives: it extends to the vaster number of the unsuccessful. The larger part of mankind fall at length and justly into the mood of the penitent thief. Life has been one long and miserable mistake. Foolish interests have been cultivated at the expense of wiser ones; selfish courses have been chosen, and those that were noble rejected; courage and devotion have been diverted from their legitimate objects, and wasted upon the vain and impossible; the beauty and the chivalry of existence have been sacrificed, not to the Eternal Holiness, but to Moloch; the early, infinitely beautiful, and prophetic blossom of manhood and womanhood

was blasted and no fruit has followed; the homes founded upon the instincts, and for a while penetrated by great affections, exhausted their moral and emotional outfit and became dwellings in the dust; business careers that promised well have sunk to an unequal struggle to keep the wolf from the door; and old age, that in the distance seemed a reservation for the quieting of the heart, is visited by unexpected anxieties and sorrows. This is the outline of a history not very far from universal. Men are overborne; the odds against them prove too many; they labor on, but under the sense of failure. Now for this consciousness of failure nothing can take the place of the pity of God in Christ. To speak of the pity of God, without Christ, will not do in this instance. The compassionating man may lead to belief in the compassionating God; at all events, there is no other path to faith for the countless multitudes of the defeated. Confidence in the everlasting worth for God of those who have been unsuccessful here can be created nowhere except in the atmosphere of Christ's ministry. The weary and the heavy-laden want rest in the Divine sympathies of Jesus, and his name will renew courage under the most crushing defeat, and rekindle hope on the very boundaries of the outer darkness.

The forgiveness of sins is only the beginning of the higher life, but it is the beginning. The message of the preacher sounds in the ears of

thousands who have long since abandoned all thought of the perfect life, who have surrendered their ideals as foolish fictions, and who live in the far country in moral famine and inward disgrace. The moralism of Christianity has absolutely no meaning for these multitudes, any more than the sky has for a caged eagle. The sight of it awakens mysterious reminiscences and momentary hopes, but the fixed mood is one of indifference. That magnificence is for the fortunate and not the unfortunate, for the free and not the imprisoned. The suffering and hardened and indifferent world waits for a broken heart in the presence of the Eternal pity in Christ. The primary want is the dissolving of the soul in a sea of regret and grief over the beauty of the Lord made real in the Master. The moral ideal will never rise upon these multitudes until it rises out of this sea of penitential feeling, like the sun out of a troubled ocean. Nothing but the fires of such sorrow and love can melt the chains of evil habit, consume the force of earthly inclination, and burn up utterly the vast psychic accumulation of a soul alienated from the true order and divine law of its life. Passion led astray, and passion must recover to righteousness. Only the fury of love can avail for those within the prison of moral despair. The Pentecostal movement was of this character. The apostolic church began in immortal regret and love. The masses

had long abandoned all faith in the higher life; ethical standards had been adjusted to human infirmities, and obligations had been met with imbecilities. There must be a movement of thought resulting in a permanent and mighty passion of sorrow and hope; otherwise the apostolic church cannot begin. This was the feat accomplished by Peter's sermon, and its power depended upon its assurance of forgiveness and Divine pity in the Lord.

It seems humiliating to set a grown man who cannot read his own language to the task of learning the alphabet. But there is no other way to the desired attainment. Preachers are often both fastidious and impatient; they scorn the view of human nature which considers it primarily in need of the Divine compassion, and they hate to linger so long upon what seems the mere introduction to the Christian life. But there is the world in its confirmed consciousness of moral defeat. Nothing but the tenderness and benignity that awoke the poor thief on the cross from his lifelong delusion, that rolled away the thick cloud of his doubt, that fixed his sane mind upon the immutable reality of the Divine world, and that drew from his inmost heart the great and confident request, "Jesus, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom," can avail for the general need of mankind to-day. The pulpit that disowns this message is not the pulpit for

humanity. It is the organ of a class, a sect, an aristocracy; it is not the voice of God for the million. And what is wanted to-day more than anything else is a Christianity for the nation. Elect individuals and households may go on to perfection; the people need repentance and faith. National penitence must precede faith in the possibility of national righteousness. Unprecedented material success has laid the life of the people under the consciousness of moral failure. Multitudes believe that morality constitutes no essential part of human life, simply because they have lost sight of it in the world, and can see no room for it in the struggle for business existence. When the moral consciousness has, for any reason, gone to wreck, its recovery is the first task of the preacher. And the elemental powers of the moral world, the forces creative of insight and love and hope, are the sympathies of the Lord Jesus. His place must be supreme in the pulpit of to-day, because only his divine humanity can recover from wreck the moral consciousness of the people; only his effulgent compassions can reveal the Eternal beauty and reanimate the lives that have long been dead; only his gracious pity can win again to hope and to fresh and undiscourageable effort the multitudes that seem to themselves elected to everlasting despair. The author of the fifty-first Psalm, whoever he was and whatever may have been the form of his sin,

voices by anticipation the need of mankind: "Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow."[1] A moral bath is the world's first necessity; a soaking in the sea of penitential feeling; the cleansing and renewal of life that can come only out of the depths of regret and hope, and the conscience and heart dissolved in high emotion and transformed into a sublime passion. The message of the Absolute pity in Jesus Christ is the supreme instrument to this end. "For as, when the likeness painted on a panel has been effaced by stains from without, he whose likeness it is must needs come once more to enable the portrait to be renewed on the same wood; for, for the sake of his picture, even the mere wood on which it is painted is not thrown away, but the outline is renewed upon it: in the same way, also, the most holy Son of the Father, being the Image of the Father, came to our region to renew man once made in his likeness, and find him as one lost, by the remission of sins."[2] And the supreme difficulty of the times is not faced until the preacher confronts the need of national repentance, and the origin of moral life for the body of the people. Class-preaching is fatal if accepted without protest and as a finality. The message of Jesus is for the nation, and the preacher must not fear to match the gospel

[1] Psalm li. 7.

[2] Athanasius, The Incarnation, ch. xix. 1, 2.

against the most inveterate mood of the time, — national indifference to the ideal. And here, again, Athanasius has a timely word for the Christian minister: "Just as a noble wrestler, great in skill and courage, does not pick out his antagonists for himself, lest he should raise a suspicion of his being afraid of some of them, but puts it in the choice of the onlookers, and especially so if they happen to be his enemies, so that, against whomsoever they match him, him he may throw, and be believed superior to them all; so, also, the Life of all, our Lord and Saviour, even Christ, did not devise a death for his own body, so as not to appear to be fearing some other death, but he accepted on the cross, and endured, a death inflicted by others, and above all by his enemies, which they thought dreadful and ignominious and not to be faced, so that, this also being destroyed, both he himself might be believed to be the Life, and the power of death be brought utterly to nought."[1] Christianity was at the first, and in the highest sense, a popular religion; and if it is to continue to be the religion of the nation and mankind, its preachers must return to the elemental power of the pity of God in Jesus Christ.

[1] The Incarnation, xxiv. 1, 2, 3.

III.

Passing now from preliminaries to the discussion proper, it is to be noted that there is one marked tendency of the time that favors this devout return to Christ on the part of the preacher. History is counting for more every day among our representative scholars. The ideal world is great; so, also, is the field of its manifestation, — space and time. Events, facts, circumstances, persons, national movements, are the forms through which the Divine world affirms its reality. And the two belong together, at least as far as man is concerned. The idea cannot be understood except in the light of its history, and the disregard of the forms of time and circumstance, place and personality, in the treatment of the idea, is a sin against it, no less than disrespect to the need of humanity. Whether Hegel is justly responsible for the habit of mind that treats history as the mere husk of thought, it would not be safe to say; but certainly the schools that have drawn their inspiration from him have done despite to the rich course of events. This is notably the attitude of the English Transcendental school, of whose principles the works of the late Thomas Hill Green are the most powerful presentation. This school has done herculean service for the supremacy of a spiritual interpretation of the universe and man's

life; it has dealt a philosophic death-blow to sensationalism, with its whole brood of metaphysical imbecilities, in its consummate Humian form, and in many ways and in magnificent measure rescued British speculation from implicit atheism, and enriched it with the greater thoughts of other nations. Still it is by no means free from transgression of the law of God, and one of its sins is its undervaluation of history. In his noble little book, "The Witness of God," Professor Green defines God as an act of eternal sacrifice, and Christ as the reproduction of that act in time. This Christ he does not identify with Jesus of Nazareth; the ideal is suggested, wondrously suggested, by his history, but is not to be confounded with it. The essence of the Christian faith is an act of death to sin, and of life to holiness. The historical is but incidental, and has nothing to do with the eternal force of the truth. Death, resurrection, and ascension are forms for the Christ ideal, and the evangelical tradition empties its total meaning into a supreme ethical conception.[1] This habit of mind cannot

[1] Witness of God. Idealism at the expense of history, — that is the sin of this and numberless other productions from the same school. One wants to recall these thinkers to the witness of God in fact. The undervaluation of the temporal may amount to blasphemy against the Eternal. At all events, temporal and eternal are here in a sacramental union, and the separation of either from the other is despite done to the genius of philosophy, no less than the spirit of religion.

prevail; the course of events and the richness and robustness of fact are too mighty for it. Long ago the reaction set in, and history is regarded as inseparable from its embodied idea. In the interest of faith, scholars have explored the history of faith; in homage to ideas, thinkers have traced the growth of ideas. And just as we associate the stars with night, — with night in the deepening twilight, in the progress up to her sable meridian, and in the gradual lifting of her vast shadow, — so we are coming to associate permanently, inevitably, ideas and their great historic setting, particular truths and their epochal manifestation, the energies of the world of thought and the arena of their victorious expression. The historic spirit is ever the best ally of the intellectual spirit; and while history makes possible a larger abstraction of ideas, and enables the scholar who is at the same time a thinker to dispense with its forms and devote himself to the building of the temple of pure and absolute truth, still for the purposes of education in the individual mind and among men at large, and in the interest of power, the permanent association of ideas and their great historic expression is a habit of thought that all wise men will vie with one another to perpetuate. Thus it comes to pass that the most searching scholarship of the age, that which finds in the records of the New Testament the largest accidental and temporary

element, nevertheless shows a relation between Christ and Christianity more organic, indissoluble, and absolute.

This intellectual habit of our century must be regarded as of the utmost importance to the preacher. He must not, even if he has a well-defined system of thought, become its open and constant advocate; least of all must he stand forth as the champion of a finished interpretation of the life of man. The work is not completed; the table of contents is before us, and the plan of the great vital discussion is already fairly well indicated; but several important chapters yet remain to be written, and beyond what is written it is not edifying to go. The preacher must be able to read ideas through history; to see how far they receive adequate expression in a given section of history; to keep them warm and human and mighty through perpetual alliance with the intellectual passion, the moral struggle, and the noble sorrow and hope of mankind. There is not in all this foolish world anything so utterly vain as abstract preaching, the presentation of ideas totally disengaged from the times and persons in which they first appeared, the discussion of moral truth out of all relation to the souls that brought it into our world. It will be seen later that there is a fatal philosophic objection to the abstract treatment of truth when regarded as other than a temporary method of thought, and that

the heart of humanity is right when it demands a perpetual association between substance and form, history and truth, Christ and Christianity.[1]

IV.

The notion that accounts for human progress as due to the agency of great men lends its weighty sanction to the assertion that Christ should stand at the centre of all preaching. For the believer in freedom, for the man who cannot accept the wild materialistic generalization that all the life on this planet is in the last analysis the result of the fashioning sweep of cosmic forces, human progress can be accounted for only as it is seen to issue from the ascendency of great men. Great men are the mediators of the intellectual and moral power of God, and are therefore the proximate cause of the evolution of mankind. Men of exalted genius are more than the

[1] It is remarkable that Dr. Bushnell, whose studies kept him wholly ignorant of Kant, is nevertheless dealing with Kant's problem in his rather diffuse Dissertation on Language, and in his far clearer, compacter, and finer production, The Gospel a Gift to the Imagination. He saw, and it is a remarkable witness to his genius, that thought is inseparable from sense-forms, and so-called abstract thinking is but thought with the sensuous accompaniment attenuated to the last degree. The dialectic of Plato is a wonderful exhibition of the power of his spirit to eliminate all but the slightest shadow, the palest image of sense, from the work of the reason; but when he tries to emancipate himself wholly from the forms of this world, he goes off into nowhere; and abstract preaching follows his example, without at all sharing in the magnificence of his movement.

product of their time: they make a special draft upon eternity on their way hither, and they become upon the maturing of their powers the makers of their time. Originality is the highest realization of freedom; for it implies the truest insight into the order of the world, material and moral, and the ability to keep in loyal accord with that. What is perfect freedom if it be not the gift of perfect discernment and the power of a complete obedience? Originality is, then, the maker of this human world of ours; and the new and valid insights work through the new and mighty personality. The advent of a truly great man is, as it were, a fresh and wiser hand upon the helm of human history. In accordance with his closer observation and sounder judgment, he changes the course of human progress. The working forces are with us, immanent in our race; but the great man comes, puts his hand to the wheel, and steers the vast self-moving craft in new and happier directions. Dim and nebulous as the personality of Moses has become, the most destructive criticism is still confident that in the splendor of his genius and the force of his character Hebrew nationalism had its origin. It is easy to see how the history of the people of Israel is the history of their great men. Moses, David, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the unknown prophet of the exile mark the successive appearance of new ideal forces working through extraordinary personalities.

Wherever we turn, the same view of human progress is supported. Luther gave a new direction to the subsequent development of European life; he was the master of his age, and turned its best forces to fresh and momentous expression. To write the history of the Reformation and leave Luther out of the account is not possible. Granted that great ideas were concerned with the movement, — the recovered faith in the direct access of the individual soul to God, the rights of scholarship and reason, the fresh impulses of a young but growing nationalism, — still these ideas were centred in the strongest personality of the time, and through that dauntless manhood were wielded with elemental energy upon the imagination and heart of Europe. Luther is but a conspicuous example of the general method of historical evolution. There are in our own annals two great names, without which we could not in the least understand our history, and without which, so far as we can see, that history itself could not have been what it is. But for the large sagacity, the exalted patriotism, the unerring tact, the statuesque character, and the majestic personality of its first President, — a personality that had the power to create and sustain an ever-widening enthusiasm for itself, — this country would have perished in its cradle. The same thing may be said with equal truth of Abraham Lincoln. He was the master of his generation.

He understood the sentiment of the North and the logic of slavery; he measured, as no other mind did, the forces of hostility to the Union and of friendship for it; he knew when to move and when to arrest his steps. He was well aware that he was dependent for success upon the loyalty of his fellow-citizens; he spoke the right word at the right time, and waited long enough, but never too long, for the development of patriotic support. He set before himself the highest end, — the union and honor of his country; he had to reach that end through war and the defeat of half the people and financial disaster to many parts of the country. He had for his power of accomplishment the forces in the national heart and the power of the public credit. These he understood, developed, and wielded as no other man of his time did or could. Lincoln was an epochal man, and he turned the stream of our national life in new and unexpected directions. The war was fought by the power of an idea, — American nationalism. The greatest intellectual representative of that idea was Daniel Webster; but the greatest political advocate of it, the wisest and most powerful administrator in its behalf, was Abraham Lincoln. The ideas upon which the country was founded were again blended in a great personality, and their power once more became living and revolutionary. The lesson that lies upon the surface of our own his-

tory is the lesson of all history. Pericles in Athens, Cæsar in Rome, Charlemagne in Mediæval Europe, Cromwell in England, Knox in Scotland, and Napoleon in France, all are epoch-making men in the history of human affairs. The contention is that the great idea is blended with the great personality, that truth and manhood work together with controlling power.

Even in the region of philosophy, where it is usually considered that ideas count for everything and personality for nothing, it is not difficult to see that the most important qualification must be made to such a statement. The personality of Socrates, both in the traditions that have given us the image of it with an approach to the actual man, and in the more or less ideal presentations of Plato, has been the greatest philosophic incentive in the whole history of human speculation. From physics to ethics, from nature to man, — nature's master, — was the courageous creed of the great Athenian; a creed so perfectly expressed in the entire habit of the man that the personality rather than the philosopher has survived. And, if we take for another example a character at the farthest remove from Socrates, we can still discern the force of personality in philosophy. Probably no thinker ever made less of personality than Aristotle. The subject under discussion, the right method in the movement upon it, and the attainment of the exact and cer-

tain truth, — these seem to be his sole aim and interest; and it is supposed that his unsurpassed influence upon human thought has been due to the vast survey that he took of the territories of human knowledge, and the masses of valid and final thinking contained in his works. These merits are certainly his; but I venture the suggestion that the main and permanent power of Aristotlê has been the blending of these high excellences with another and a higher, the extraordinary character of the mind revealed in his works. From almost any single work of this thinker that has come down to us, it would be possible to construct an image of his mind, to write a description of his intellect, to work out a psychology of the man. There is a positive fascination in the acuteness, the comprehensiveness, and the fruitfulness of that thinking personality, its profound and eager love of truth, its great sincerity, its steady and massive earnestness, and its majestic rational force. Again the personality of the philosopher becomes the organ of the liberating ideas, and these owe much of their persistence and charm to the imperial intellect that must ever remain in association with them.

The inference from all this is plain. The advent of Christianity was the beginning of the greatest revolution in human history. The ideas of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood

of man, the conceptions of the kingdom of God and eternal life, the whole revelation of the character of our Maker and the order for man and society brought into the world by Jesus Christ, cannot be separated from him. He is his religion. He accomplished more while he was in the world, and he has done more since he left it, by the homage that his character has won from human hearts, than by the power of any single idea. Precious as the gospels are, the sympathetic reader is soon able to see that Christ is infinitely greater. They are but broken lights, and he is ever more than they. His power is seen in the manner in which he evoked the opposition of his time, in the way in which he concentrated it upon himself. It was his personal power that opened the infernal depths in the hearts of Pharisee and Saducee, in priest and scribe, that drew out the latent and deadly poison in his countrymen. "Criticism," it has been said, "is a kind of homage," and the power to madden the hypocrite and the knave, to gather into one huge black cloud the ignorance and the perversity of many generations, and to draw it upon one's self, is an unmistakable sign of the highest endowment; as it is only the lofty mountain that can collect upon itself the impurities of wide-extending expanses of poisoned atmosphere, and open upon its own head the terrible but cleansing storm.

We must think, also, of the homage that Christ drew upon himself, — the love that he received, the inspiration that he communicated, the consolation that he imparted, the heroism that he created in the men and women who best knew him. This has been the chief line of his power over subsequent times. Under the shadow of his great and gracious personality, men have abandoned their guilty loves, and turned toward righteousness with unappeasable longing. The fires that he has kindled have burned down the structures of evil habit; and forces mediated by the sense of his presence have brought into existence the richest, the most various, and the fairest types of human character. In the mystic sense of companionship with him, millions have struggled to do their duty, looking to God, and not to man, for duty's holy and sure reward. And as civilization springs out of the emotions and habits of the people, — as it is but the life articulated that surges in a boundless sea of feeling, instinct, intuition, and moral custom in the popular heart, — so Christ's control of the sources of life in the Western world proclaims him the greatest force in the progress that this portion of our race has achieved. It is a fact like this that, entirely apart from all theological considerations, opens one's eyes to the unmeasured power of the person of Christ, that makes one regret the poor use of it that one has hitherto made, that rebukes

one's stupidity in failing to discern the Divine Presence that has penetrated our whole civilization with its truth and grace.

V.

Psychological considerations make it plain that the utmost emphasis should be placed upon the Person of Christ. The reproduction of his life in the life of mankind would mean for it the highest conceivable worth and happiness. The ideal fits the soul, and lays imagination under the largest and holiest spell. For those who make it their business to institute a new mind in human beings, there cannot be a moment's hesitation as to what mind shall be their chosen standard. Mind must be subdued to mind, and all must be brought under captivity to Christ. And it cannot be said too often that the transfusion of one mind through another is a much more hopeful undertaking than the enthronement of abstract ideas, and their investment with authority over the fountains of passion and the sources of activity. What is the highest ambition of the true preacher? Does he not believe that it is possible for his moral consciousness to reproduce itself in the hearts of his people, so that the better mind that is in him shall take possession of them? Is he not confident that a noble man with the gift of utterance, one who is true to the soul of things, and in inspired accord

with it, and armed with its holy sympathies, and filled with its resistless persuasions, can put himself into the mind of a thousand? Is not this the loftiest ambition that can enter the human breast, — not indeed to cram the hearer with a given order of theological opinion, to set over him the preacher's system of belief, to strive to make him willing not only to swear allegiance for himself during the term of his natural life, but also to serve upon him a requisition that he shall coerce his children into the same relation, and to count every man an uncircumcised Philistine and heathen reprobate who refuses to exchange freedom for bondage, but to reproduce the better mind that by the grace of God has taken possession of the preacher in the thought and life of a thousand souls? This is the power of all true speech. Demosthenes strives to make his mind that of all the patriotic Athenians of his day, and in a manner he succeeds. The same is true of Cicero, Chatham, Burke, and Webster. The whole beneficent movement begins from the domination of the inferior mind by the superior, of the ill-informed and weak by the well-informed and strong. This is the method of moral training in all the really exalted family life of which we have any record. The aim has been, not to tie the young mind to a given circle of opinions, but to reproduce in it the consciousness of the father or mother, as that has been

secured by faith, sobered by reflection, purified by wisdom, and lifted into moral energy through its accord with the order of the world and the best sympathies and ideals of mankind. The mind of Monica was victorious over Augustine, and to the last Carlyle was ruled, as we have seen, by the original and profoundly religious spirit of his mother. It was the intellectual and moral vigor of an aunt that did most to form the youthful mind of Emerson. The same procedure goes on in the schools and colleges of the land. The mental gifts of the teacher, his trained faculties and his high character as a man, do more to develop the intellect and form the spirit of the pupil than the largest mass of knowledge imparted. Truth has power; but when it is represented in the masterful mind, and in a large way reflected in the gentlemanly feeling and manly character of the teacher, its power is tenfold. In his remarkable address at the Washington Centennial in New York in 1889, President Eliot said that Washington's fate was wellnigh incomparable, because of the incessant transfusion of his great mind through the intellectual life of the children and youth and manhood of America. That certainly lays bare the great principle of true education. Ideas are not the greatest power of change for the better, but a mind full of ideal forces.

It is here that the preaching of Christ puts

itself in accord with the universal method of education. The best mind in relation to God, and the deepest and noblest in relation to the life of the soul and society, is the mind of Christ. Christ is not simply great thoughts, but these held in a solution of divine passion; he is not merely the truth, but the truth in terms of life. From the point of view of the pedagogue, the preaching of Christ is the only sane procedure. An extensive and noble literature has come into existence during the last quarter of a century upon the question as to the best method of reaching the mind of childhood and youth, upon the modes of approach that are easiest, and the forms of appeal that are most effectual in bringing under cultivation the largest extent of the human brain. The want of education has come to mean that, of the total brain capacity in a given individual, only a fractional part is in active service. Education is something more and deeper than the ability to read and write and reckon, construe Greek and Latin sentences, and hold in the memory a few of the facts of history. It is a question of the development of the total brain capacity, the awakening of latent powers, the bringing into active service and under the direction of the will the entire intellectual possibility. Numberless experiments have been made, all going to show that comparatively few nominally educated persons are really so; that vast areas of

the brain are inactive; that in fact they have never been reached by any adequate stimulus; that the majority of those who pass for men and women of accomplishment are operating the business of the world, studying the problems of society, and measuring the character of the ultimate realities, with but a fraction of their possible power. There is, it is believed, among the old records of the town of Boston, an order to this effect, that a given road be constructed as far as Newton, but no farther, for the reason that it was extremely unlikely that a highway back into the wilderness beyond that point would ever be needed! The Pilgrims and Puritans had as good a right to think that they had brought under cultivation all the available land within the boundaries of what is now the United States as most educated persons have for supposing that their total intellectual capacity is engaged in the conduct of life. As the strip of land on the Atlantic seaboard occupied by the colonies was to the mighty continent beyond it, so is the brain power under actual development, even among educated persons, to the total brain capacity. It is this discovery that is the foundation of the new education. To-day, representative teachers are very much in the mood of Columbus after he had made his first voyage. Something rich and wonderful has been found. Those who have gone into the study of the child mind most deeply are

the apostles of hope. What they have seen they have not fully explored, but they are sure that they have looked upon a new phase of the Old World. It is their vision of the enormous latent brain capacities of the child and youth, which are but superficially touched by the current forms of teaching, that makes them savage in their criticism. Samson did not know his strength until the young lion roared against him, and similarly these latent intellectual powers are waiting for the forms of appeal that shall awake and bring them forth. It is worth while for President G. Stanley Hall to give himself as the apostle of the new education. His severe and thorough arraignment of methods now in use comes not from malice for the teacher, but from love of the child and youth. He sees, as few in our generation see, the vast areas of brain substance that, in the overwhelming majority of persons, lie fallow. He sees men lifting the burdens of life with a single finger when their Maker has provided them a full hand, and driving the supports upon which they are to found their homes with a bare fist when they might employ a trip-hammer.

The new education, which has certainly come to stay, has in this discussion a profound significance. It means for the preacher a revelation of the moral powers that are dependent for their evolution upon the development of certain areas of the brain. There is everything to hope for

in the way of the evolution of moral power and magnificent character, if certain sections of the brain can be brought into full and predominating activity; and there is nothing but discouragement before the preacher who fails to reach these centres of the higher energy. God made men upright, but they have found out many inventions. There are sources of power in humanity to-day sufficient for the moral transformation of society, if only the slumbering energy could be roused and called into active service. Those who see the facts stand aghast over the continued waste of manhood, over the stupid postponement of a millennium that might be indefinitely hastened in its coming. The men who are in this great study, and who at first were tempted by materialism, have been converted by it into the profoundest spiritual beliefs. Nothing can properly educate man, so it is held by these students, but the appeal of the Infinite which is revelation, — but the response to the Infinite which is religion. The highest form of revelation is, of course, the highest form of appeal, and the mightiest religious experience is the fullest development of the spiritual capacity of man. All modes of educational stimulus must terminate in the stimulus which only the Infinite can supply; and all responses to the teacher's art that stop short of the response to God are superficial, — the merest ripples on the surface of the lake measured

against its total unbroken depth. The genuine preacher will not be slow to see the bearing of all this upon his calling. It will make him ask, What is the supreme revelation of the Infinite, what is the highest form of his appeal? His whole procedure will fall under condemnation unless he is either a perfect man or a fool. The blundering approaches to the mind of his people that he has been making, he will now see, could have been rewarded with no other result than indifference. The superficial religiousness he will understand as consequent upon the superficial appeal, and the absence of moral power and influence in his church he will explain by the fact that the sources of spiritual energy in the brain and heart of his congregation have not been opened. Christ, and the preaching of Christ, will become for him once more the Divine message, and he will resolve to use this sovereign revelation and appeal of the Infinite in a way to call forth something like the total answer of the soul. To seek for the reproduction of Christ's mind in the mind of the community is the greatest aim that one can cherish; to present him as the appeal of God to the brain substance and soul-force of the individual is certain to be honored by a mighty response. In deep respect for the constitution of man, in entire accord with the new education, and in league with the whole logic of living, the total endeavor of the modern

pulpit should have for its motto, "Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus."[1] In the two fundamental aspects of content and character, that mind is confessedly without a parallel. "The absence from the biography of Christ of any doctrines which the subsequent growth of human knowledge, whether in natural science, ethics, political economy, or elsewhere has had to discount" is indeed remarkable. "For when we consider what a large number of sayings are recorded of or attributed to him, it becomes most remarkable that in literal truth there is no reason why any of his words should ever pass away in the sense of becoming obsolete. Contrast Jesus Christ in this respect with other thinkers of like antiquity. Even Plato . . . is nowhere in this respect compared with him. Read the dialogues and see how enormous is the contrast with the gospels in respect of errors of all kinds, reaching even to absurdity in respect

[1] Phil. ii. 5. The New Education has a message for the ministry of priceless value. It discovers the law of mental and moral development in a wonderfully fresh and vital way; it gives new insights into the marvelous capacities of the human soul; and it begets the conviction that in original endowment there is not so great a difference among mankind, rather that the highest gifts are far more widely diffused than is commonly supposed; and it indicates the reality of the objects of religion by showing their necessity for anything like the total education of man. Revelation as the appeal of the Infinite to the soul, and religion as the response of the soul to the Infinite, acquire an august meaning in the light of this new study.

of reason, and to sayings shocking to the moral sense."[1] Supplement this impressive negative with the positive transcendence of the teaching of Jesus, and add to the divine content the character of that mind, its inapproachable grace and power, and the aim of all inspired and inspiring preaching is unmistakable.

VI.

This discussion has now arrived at its most important stage. If Christ should be supreme in the modern pulpit, there must be a discoverable philosophical ground for that supremacy. A clear sense of the validity of that ground must have a profound influence upon the methods of the preacher, must make him conscious that in preaching Christ he is in accord with the deepest nature of things. Now the philosophical basis of the claim that the Master should be the final form of the preacher's message is that the ultimate reality in the universe is the personality of God, and that only personality can mediate personality. Science deals with the universe as it falls within the fields of time and space. She is true to her calling in laying the utmost weight upon the system of laws according to which things within the sphere of sensation behave. Philosophy seeks for the unity of the moral world of man and the material world of science, in the reality

[1] Thoughts on Religion, pp. 157, 158.

which, while manifested in both, lies behind them as their ground and cause; and theistic religion goes a step further, gathers the universe into a personal life, regards all things as in some sense expressions of an Infinite Will, fastens upon the soul of man as in the creative process lifted into permanent moral relations with its Maker, a divinely ordained communicant in the thought and love and life of the Father of all.

The Christian faith is grounded in the philosophy that sums up the universe in the personality of God. And if man is allowed to interpret the universe at all, it does seem that the personal way is the inevitable way. Sure of spirit within, we may advance with Berkeley, and read out of the whole sensuous appeal the ordaining mind of God. Asking the reason for the sensational stimulus that is ever flowing in upon us, awakening and feeding the intellect, furnishing the mental bricks out of which the fair structure of knowledge is built, and knowing that only mind can furnish mind, we may assume at once that what we misname matter is but the vital presence of God. Or, accepting from Mr. Spencer the declaration that our notion of power is born from within, that we could not understand the push of things against us were it not for the prior push of our life against them, we may go on to affirm that, since the only power that we know anything about is spiritual, if we are to interpret the force

that is operating upon us in the regions of sense, in the contemporaneous life of the race and through the courses of history, if we are not to stand dumb in its presence, we must say that we are face to face with God. Or we may take the path of Lotze and construe the universe with the personality of man as our guide and interpreter. In the last analysis reality lies in personality, and the whole realm of things must be centred in the will and conscience of our Maker. The power that rolls in the sea, that shines in suns and stars, that stands fast in the mountain, that utters its grace in the flower, that breaks into melody in the note of the bird, and that sweeps round man as physical environing force, is the power of the Infinite Will. The might that rises through the instincts of the heart, that flashes in the intuitions of genius, that gives volume and richness to social life, that emerges in the institutions and literatures and arts of the race, is again the might of the Supreme Person. The ultimate centre of all the force that shapes from within, and all the energy that stimulates from without, is the personal being of God. This is the eternal reality of the universe. What we call things are but the various and transient processions of the Infinite Personal Soul; what we call animal life is but the Divine differentiated into temporary, semi-independent existence; what we call man is but the primal personality uttered

in terms of its own highest being, the finite lifted into the image of the Infinite, and ordained to perpetual fellowship with him. If we are religious men, every path of intellectual advance must end in the personality of God. To the religious mind this universe is not merely a system of laws, and an infinite force acting in accordance with them; nor is it an impersonal idea evolving its hidden richness into the explicitness of concrete existence: it is the personal life of God our Father in progressive expression and realization. If, then, the momentous truth is that the ultimate reality of all things lies in the personality of God, it must follow that only personality can mediate personality, and the higher the personality in time, the more adequate will be the mediation of the personality that is above time.

Ideas are mighty because they are aspects of the living truth, because they serve in their way to conduct the mind to the recognition of the vital fact. Ideas would be sufficient if the universe were founded upon ideas and not upon the living God; or if man were a being of merely intellectual or contemplative powers, and not a nature endued with profound sympathies, and one that can rest neither in thought nor in feeling, but in the self-perfection that comes through achievement. Ideas are the image of reality at rest; thought and being are one and the same only when thought is at its highest, and only

when being is motionless. It is utterly beyond the power of intellect to represent or conceive life. Between the picture of Niagara and Niagara itself there is an infinite distance. We need not disparage the picture; we need not dwell upon its inadequacies; we may hang it in our homes, and by its aid stand, whenever we will, by the side of the thundering cataract. At the same time, we must never overlook the fact that the best picture can furnish nothing more than the most distant approach to the reality. How can that which is forever at rest represent that which is forever in motion? How can the lifeless and stationary thing image the boiling and storming abyss? There is the same contradiction between thought and reality, if we suppose that thought gives us reality in its living majesty. The features of the cataract that are in eternal repetition are given in the picture; but the endless magnificent change, the actual torrent and plunge, and all the sublime accompaniments in color and sound, cannot be transferred to plate or canvas. It is the same with ideas and the highest life of the universe. They are wonderful, but the momentum and thunder of being is not in them. They are indispensable, but they are not the highest, and they can never be the final mediation of God. Here one sees the folly of substituting a system of theology, Trinitarian or Unitarian, for the Personal Life of the universe.

It is giving the mother, not her child, but some distorted picture of it; it is spreading the table, not with apples of Eden, but with the poor images of them. What men want to know is the active, enlightening, rewarding reality of things.

I would not be understood as doing other than honor to the magnificent gift by which man reaches general views of the world, by which he forms notions, puts the fullness of space and time into the categories of the understanding, and lays intellectual hold upon reality; nor would I consent to be placed among those who see nothing but vanity in the effort to compass the complete organization of thought. For all that, in its own place, I cherish the profoundest respect. My contention is, that reflective thought cannot pierce to the secret of existence; that we need another guide if we would look upon the face of God; that we must seek another mediator if we would behold with the eye of the spirit, and feel in the centres of our being, the reality of the Eternal Love. Man is a moral being, one created to be a doer of the will of God, and not a hearer only; and it is only as thought and sympathy serve as the wings of the achieving spirit that they bring us close to the secret of the universe. The boat upon the river and the intellect upon the great current of a strenuous moral life both come home.

Metaphysicians tell us that when we have taken

our common notions of cause and substance and relation, when we have analyzed the compound of experience and reached the pure conceptions of the understanding, the moulds into which all knowable existence must be run, we have touched the permanent form of reality. The human mind and the world, when they have looked at each other long enough, answer to each other as face answers to face in water. Take from the Infinite reality this show under which it appears in time and space, pierce backward to the Eternal under this phenomenal pageant, and then our conceptions at their best answer to, are but the thought-side of, the ultimate and everlasting truth. This style of thinking I consider valid; only I would insist in coming to the highest of all the categories, the form of the personal soul. Only at this point can we reach the junction, the inseparable union of thought and being. Cause and substance, relation and reality, are but the logical forms under which the ego is conceived, used as moulds into which the world melting into sensation is to be run; the ego itself being at once the supreme logical form and the supreme reality, the fruitful source of the whole scheme of notions, and the concentration of all the attributes which these notions connote or represent. Thus the whole scheme of logical forms runs up into that of the personal soul, and the supreme logical form, I repeat, is but the reflection of the su-

preme personal reality. Logic lands us in personality as its crown, and we pass from the crown to the living head by which it is worn. Personality, as the ultimate form of the logical judgment and the highest form of reality, stands out clear and mighty, begins to construe the world for itself, and in its construction to justify philosophy and poetry and morality. Philosophy finds the ultimate meaning of the universe under the notion of the ego; poetry looks through the worlds of time and space as through a sublime symbol to the eternal beauty; morality, as the victorious struggle of the personal soul after righteousness, discovers God through life. We need philosophy with its notion, and poetry with its symbol, and morality with its life. These three great expressions of the human spirit must ever remain, but the greatest of the three is the vital and victorious moral movement.

Here is the attraction of the living world to men of genius. It is a piece of reality, and not a logical table with mystic correspondences; and the deep and sympathetic study of it leads through life to the Eternal Life. We cannot blame a Shakespeare, a Goethe, or a Tennyson for the passion after the concrete that consumed them. Through reality, under local and mutable forms, they were beholding reality Universal and Immutable. The philosopher at his best is certainly a king among men: but then he is so very seldom

at his best; he is so very apt to conclude that the only path to the truth is that order of conceptions, that table of notions, that scheme of categories, over which he has toiled so laboriously; he is apt to place thought above life, and count an idea a better mediator of the Eternal than a man. The best complement to the mind of the philosopher is the mind of the child. The world interests the child because it is a living world, and that interest is the mark, not of childhood alone, but of humanity. Life comes, not as a vast scientific generalization, but as a superbly beautiful reality, springing out of the ground in grass and flower, moving upon the earth in a thousand forms of strength and grace, breaking upon the ear in all harmonious sounds, filling the eye with the poetry of motion, as in the flight of the bird, distributing and at the same time gathering itself into permanent centres of power in loving men and women. The world is alive, and its life is rich and capable of enriching our human existence. Science with her generalizations must make the domain of sense more richly real, and fill it with fresh charm for the eyes and ears and sympathies of men. Similarly, the domain of religious history, the realm of Christian fact, must be handled in the way that will keep all its freshness and humanness. The world wants ideas, but not in the abstract and disembodied state. It wants them in combination with the chemical,

the physical, the astronomical, and the biological facts which they explain; it wants them as they show their might in just and courageous deeds, as they shine in the forms of love, as they storm in the indignation of the reformer, as they utter their fullness in the richness and promise of human lives under the discipline of God. When upon the imagination of the Greek sculptor the ideal Parthenon dawned, he found no rest until the actual Parthenon crowned the city's heights; and to this day the recovery of the Greek's vision of beauty is inevitably followed by attempts at the restoration of its incomparable form. As, in the case of art, idea and form go together, so it is in the realm of the religious life. As it is the real soul that finds the real world, so it is the living human personality that reveals the living God.

The inference at this point must be already obvious. If life can alone lead to life, if personality can alone reveal personality, the place of Christ in the modern pulpit is plain. Only the supreme person in time can give us the supreme Person above time. We reach the living God only as we find him mediated by the sons of God, and the leader of all the sons of God must take his place at the heart of our faith and at the centre of our educational and religious endeavor.

Another aspect of the general philosophical vindication for the ascendency of Christ in the

modern pulpit is the familiar fact that all the moral and spiritual truth in the world has been born into it through the struggles of the human soul. I have referred to the fact that reality lies in personality, that truth is life, that this universe is centred in an Infinite Person, and that only as mediated by persons can we experience the fullness of his wisdom and pity. I now call attention to the human side of the subject, and remark that the ideal forces in which preachers deal from Sunday to Sunday represent the effort, the sorrow, and the victory of humanity. We often hear about the history of ideas, but for the most part such histories are colorless and lifeless things. Think of the labor, the suspense, and the pain represented in the accepted scientific truth of the world. To make an abstract scheme of it is to detach it from the intellectual travail of the race, and to empty it of its charm, incentive, and grandeur. For the purposes of thought and practical life, the abstraction must be made; but we should come back as soon as possible to the splendid totality, the association of scientific truth with scientific men. The cost in toil, in pain, in blood, of the contributions to science made by such men as Copernicus, Galileo, Newton, Harvey, and Darwin it would be difficult to overestimate; and the mighty results are thanklessly accepted unless at times we think of their human value. Even in the

case of those truths that are remotest from the higher life of man, the human element is vast and priceless; and an ideal history of science would be a record, not merely of discovery, but of long-suffering and victorious manhood. The effort and the hardship of men of science are often quite as great as those of famous travelers and discoverers. The romance that surrounds the achievements of men like Columbus, Captain Cook, Livingstone, and Stanley should invest the whole circle of accepted scientific truth. The eager, fevered pulse of humanity is in it all. The beat of the surging sea of laborious and victorious intellect is heard through it all.

How much more force there is in this contention when applied to moral and spiritual truth will be obvious upon the slightest consideration. Back of the Republic of Plato, the Ethics of Aristotle, the De Officiis of Cicero, and the moral discussions of the Stoics, there lie two mighty civilizations. Each of these books is a symbol of the splendid struggle and achievement of men, a glass through which we can look into the seething soul of our race, an eminence from which we can behold the battle with evil extending over a thousand generations. It is genius that interprets, that constructs maxims, that forms codes of law, that makes decalogues; but it is humanity that lives. The amount of suffering lying back of the perception of the principle upon which the

story of the choice of Hercules is based is incalculable. Think of the dismal life of delusion prolonged through a thousand years before the first intuition came that self-denial was sometimes a good; think of the further suffering endured before the intuition became a commonplace of morality; and think again of the struggle and tears necessary to keep it a commonplace in the higher thought of men! Behind that beautiful imagination of Orpheus sailing past the Siren's isle in disdain, because he was himself a musician and was able to drown the seductive strain in a flood of diviner melody, there lie the sorrow and the aspiration of uncounted millions. The richness of life represented in it, the defeat of evil under the shadow of the good, the fine ideal of human character that it holds forth, have back of them the deepest, saddest, and noblest of all histories. If we ascend from the ethical to the spiritual, the fact is even more obvious. We have our Christian monotheism holding its sway clear of superstition over the devout modern mind. Think of the homage to stock and stone, the Moloch-worship, the polytheism, the soul-annihilating pantheisms, the perplexity, the self-immolation, and the despair that led the way to this vast and beneficent faith! As the cloud settled upon Sinai when God appeared to his servant, so upon the whole upward movement of humanity because of the Divine Presence in it there has rested an immemorial sorrow. To

read out of the sacred books of China the golden rule even in its negative form, or to study the fragments of exalted truth in the religious literature of India, without a pathetic sense of the silent centuries of suffering represented in these achievements, is stupid and brutish in the last degree.

When in the course of this revelation of God through humanity we come to the main stream, the discovery of God made through the Hebrew race, we still find that the light breaks in through the struggle of the human heart. The great prophet of the exile, speaking of his people, says, "Thy God is thy glory," and, we may add, "thy sorrow." Who can tell what psychical labor preceded the conception of Jehovah reached by Moses, and the enlargement and elevation of that conception in the mind of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Job, and the later psalmists! The literature created by these men is a monument to the method of God in his self-disclosure to men. It is through the silence of banishment, the vision that overwhelms the heart with awe and fear, the duty that makes the soul stagger with its weight, the suffering that drinks up the life of the spirit, the struggles that issue in triumph only as the strength seems almost gone. To employ the ideas of the Hebrew race without a constant reference to the souls of the Hebrew prophets is to keep ourselves and our people out of the divine trag-

edy of life. The same is true of the New Testament. The ideas that Paul brings are borne in upon a sea of fire. The tides of his own life — toiling, rejoicing, sorrowing — float them to our door. What is the meaning of Gethsemane but as a picture of the cost of righteousness? what is the significance of Calvary but as an eternal reminder that the nature of God as love is realized only through the love that stands ready to suffer unto death? The whole method of ethical achievement and spiritual manifestation has its symbol in the first Israelite's wrestle with God. Through the long night the struggle goes on, and, although man prevails with God, the morning finds him bruised and lame, and he bears upon his life to its close the marks of the Lord. To enthrone Christ in the pulpit is to associate moral and religious truth with the august personalism through which it has come into the world.

I have tried in this chapter to assign reasons for my claim that the mission of the preacher of to-day is to preach Christ. I have referred to the wholesome intellectual habit of the time, the association of great ideas with their original historic expression; I have dwelt upon the fact that the evolution of mankind can be accounted for only through the ascendency of kingly men; I have called attention to the further fact that the true method of education works through the domination of the inferior mind by the superior;

finally, I have contended that, since the centre of the universe is the Personal God, only soul can mediate soul. And these four contentions all point to the one great conclusion: Christianity and Christ must be in inseparable association, both in the cast of our thought and in the form of our teaching; the source of the whole progress of our Western world in the things of the spirit can be found only in Christ; the hope of the world lies in the promise of the complete captivity of the mind of mankind to the mind of Christ; and, once more, the sole sufficient mediator of the Infinite Personal Love is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The introduction of God to the human mind, the exposure of man to the Infinite goodness, — that is the great business of all preaching. Ideas are our approaches, our instruments; but personality full of ideal forces is our power. The ultimate Personality must be the ultimate and resistless power. The force that is to change feeling, set higher standards in the conscience, reconstruct character, remove moral infirmity, wipe out the shame of existence, and inform life with a boundless significance and hope, must be the force of the Eternal Spirit working upon the human. To lift the mind to the height of this idea of the universe as gathered into one Absolute Person, to habituate the understanding to this momentous truth, to make it aware that the

presence that perpetually overshadows it is the presence of the Infinite, to open the gates of life that the King of glory may enter, is the only sure way to make fast the soul to righteousness, to hasten its growth in all noble powers, to put it where the ultimate educational might of the world can evermore play upon it. Here is the sorrowful thing about agnosticism and atheism. They are terrible mistakes and at the same time they are self-imposed calamities. No serious man would go that way were he not thrown into despair. Perhaps single individuals and society at large need, owing to the general and brutish wickedness, the discipline of agnosticism and atheism. None the less must we deplore the mood as the greatest of all calamities. There is an education that comes to the soul from vital faith in God, and a power for good upon society that abstract right cannot give, that an atheistic or agnostic morality set upon the very pinnacle of altruism is utterly unable to supply. The lives that kindle the transforming aspirations and hopes of mankind are those upon whom the fire of heaven has descended; and the characters that are the fragrance of history have been perfumed at the altar of the Most High. I can think of nothing so calamitous as human life organized upon the atheistic, or, what is the same thing, upon the commercial idea, and the consequent loss of all the exalting and sweetening power that comes in

upon society through faith in the Maker, and Judge, and Father of mankind. It is forever true that God does not abandon man when man abandons God; but a race under the delusion of practical atheism, with the living God unrecognized and standing outside the circle of its interests, a humanity under the horrible dream that it has no Father in heaven, can never be a conquering humanity. On the other hand, I can imagine nothing better or sublimer for man than profound and vital surrender to the Personality that rules all worlds, than the education that comes through the habitual sense of God, than the impulse toward social good, and the desire and power to bless other lives, that must issue where the spirit stands in the clear and reverent consciousness of the Infinite truth and grace. The moral personality of God is the resource of our race in its sin, and ignorance, and weakness, and sorrow; when it looks toward that it begins to hope, when it builds upon that it begins to achieve and live. The question of all questions, I repeat, must ever concern the larger introduction of God to mankind, the resting and renewing of mankind in the love of the Eternal. Philosophy and history come to our aid here. Philosophy proves that the moral power of God can be mediated only through the living personality of man, and history declares that the personality of the Divine Man is the sovereign and

indispensable manifestation of God to the world. If the modern pulpit wishes to bring men to God, it must first of all bring them to Christ; for the widest outlook over the records of humanity's long and sad struggle, and the deepest insight, join in support of the assertion that there is none other name given among men under heaven whereby the educational power of the Infinite is brought, in boundless measure and resistless form, to bear upon the whole human character. On the holy hill of Zion the worshiper under the ancient faith found Jehovah; in the sacred elevation of the personality of Christ the worshiper to-day finds his Father in heaven; and upon this mountain of the Lord the modern pulpit, if it is to retain its power over the hearts of men, must forever stand. True historical insight must ever bow before Christ; genuine philosophic talent will always acknowledge the Eternal in him; and, above all, preaching genius, wherever it is found, on to the end of time, will live and rejoice in the Lord. Since his advent, there has never been a really great preacher who did not build upon him; and the preachers of the future who will move mightily upon the conscience and aspiration of men will move upon them in the forms of his everlasting power.

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